the weekly
Standard
APRIL 20, 1998 / $2.95

I APOLOGIZE
P.J. O'ROURKE

BUTT OUT

TUCKER CARLSON
JAMES K. GLASSMAN

WEEKLY STANDARD WARNING: The Tobacco Deal Deserves to Die

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Tobacco Policy Briefing: and Limiting

Tobacco products are cheap and easy for kids steep and immediate price increases and

*Nearly 60% of the public favors price increases of up to $1.50 per pack in order to reduce youth smoking. More than 80% favor restrictions on youth access to tobacco products.**

YOUTH ACCESS BACKGROUND

62% of 12-17 year old smokers report usually buying their own cigarettes. A recent review of thirteen studies found that, on average, children and adolescents were successful in buying tobacco products 67% of the time. It's no accident that minors have little trouble getting tobacco products. The tobacco industry - and retailers who sell tobacco to kids - reap enormous profits from the illegal sale of tobacco products to minors. The CDC estimates that 256 million packs of cigarettes are sold illegally to minors each year, resulting in almost $500 million in sales.

PRICE INCREASES BACKGROUND

The price of cigarettes in the U.S. is dramatically lower than most industrialized countries, making them easily affordable for kids and adults. Numerous economic studies show a strong connection between the price of cigarettes and the level of youth consumption. Raising prices is a particularly effective way to reduce youth smoking levels, because young people have less disposable income, and we know it works. Economists estimate that for every 10% increase in the price of cigarettes, there is a comparable decrease in cigarette consumption by youth.

*Market Facts' TeleNation survey of 1,000 adults, September 19-23, 1997.

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Raising Tobacco Prices Youth Access

to buy. A national tobacco policy must include strictly enforced measures to limit youth access.

ENACT RECOMMENDATIONS: YOUTH ACCESS

We recommend a comprehensive national effort to limit youth access to replace current, disparate state and local tobacco control efforts. Without preventing state and local governments from imposing stricter measures, national legislation should:

Reaffirm FDA Authority: National tobacco legislation should reaffirm the FDA's current authority and regulations regarding youth access to tobacco and provide adequate funding for FDA enforcement.

Beginning in February, 1997, the new FDA rule established 18 as the minimum age for purchasing tobacco products. The rule requires retailers to check photo identification of anyone buying tobacco who looks younger than 27. These provisions are part of FDA's broader assertion of jurisdiction over tobacco, which is being appealed by the tobacco industry.

Retail Licensing: Mandate minimum federal standards for a retail licensing program that the federal government and state and local authorities would enforce and which would include penalties for violations and suspension or revocation of licenses.

Mandate Face-to-Face Transactions: Purchasing tobacco should require a face-to-face transaction at the point of purchase. All tobacco products should be placed behind the counter, and self-service displays should be eliminated. Tobacco vending machines should be banned.

Eliminate Kid-Friendly Distribution: All sampling (free giveaway of tobacco), packages of fewer than 20 cigarettes or single cigarettes, and purchase of tobacco through the mail should be prohibited.

ENACT RECOMMENDATIONS: PRICE INCREASES

A major component of a comprehensive national tobacco policy is a minimum $1.50 per pack increase in the price of cigarettes over the next two to three years. Other components include:

- Raising the price on all other tobacco products - including snuff, chewing tobacco, roll-your-own tobacco, pipe tobacco and cigars - to rates comparable to those imposed on cigarettes;
- Ensuring that the price of tobacco products will increase at regular intervals after the first three years in order to, at minimum, keep pace with inflation;
- Ensuring that the price increase is separate from any penalties to the industry if youth reductions are not achieved;
- Ensuring that revenues generated by tobacco price increases are used first and foremost to reduce the use of tobacco and its harmful effects, with special attention to those segments of the public which have been targeted by the tobacco industry;
- Implementing measures to discourage smuggling comparable to those that the federal government already undertakes for other sensitive products such as alcohol.

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Comprehensive Tobacco Legislation NOW!

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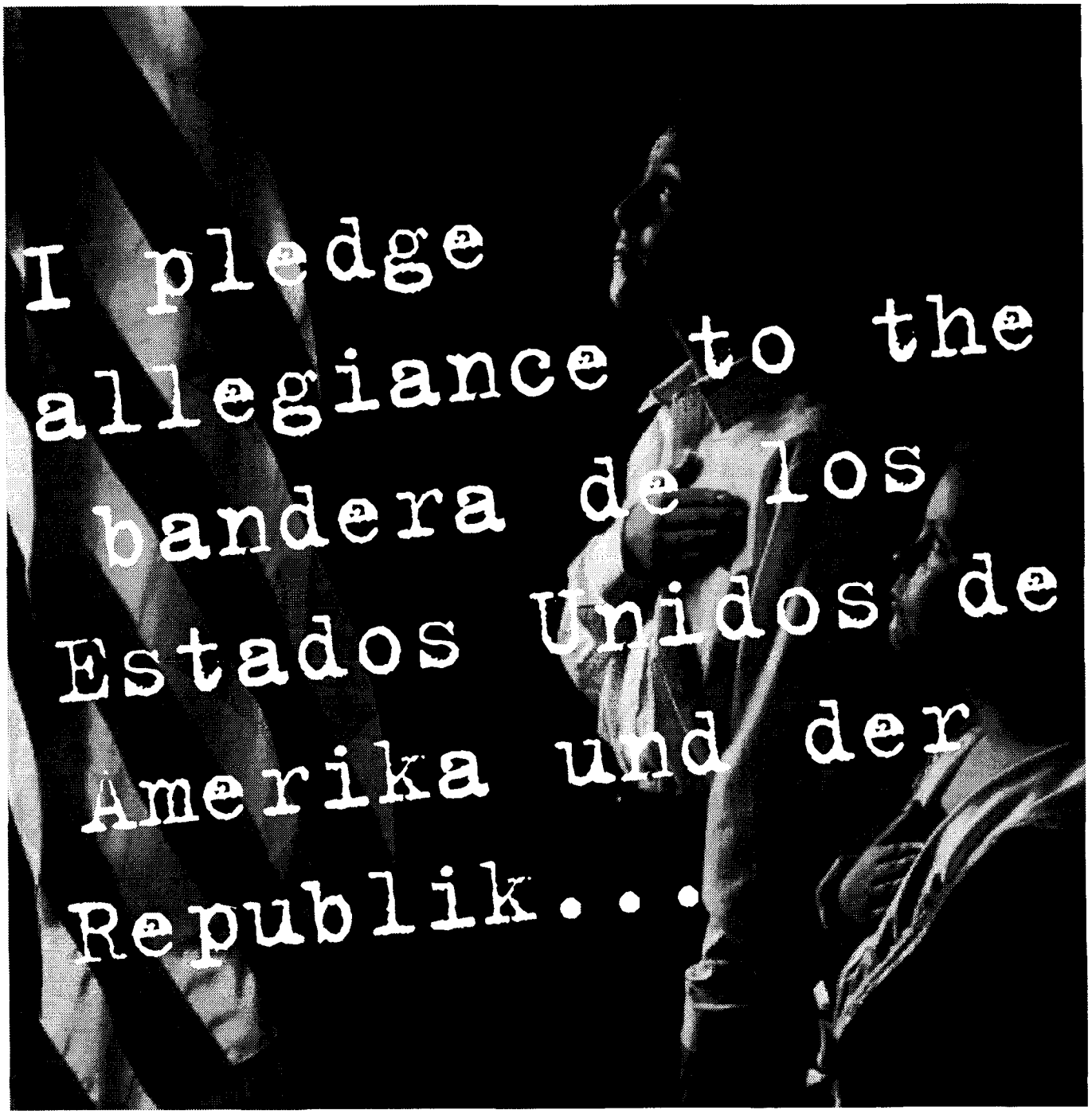

Will it come to this?

We hope not. But it doesn't look good. Because the common language of our country – English – is under attack in our schools, in our courts, and by bureaucrats and self-appointed leaders for immigrant groups.

The whole notion of a melting pot society is threatened if new immigrants aren't encouraged to learn English.

With nearly one million members, we're the largest organization fighting to make English the common language of government at all levels.

We're not suggesting that people shouldn't hold onto their native languages. We just don't believe that the government should spend money providing services in multiple languages, when money could be better used teaching new immigrants English.

Join us. Support us. Fight with us. While we can still understand each other.

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the weekly Standard

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 31 • APRIL 20, 1998

4 SCRAPBOOK
Clinton's era of good feelings; Farrakhan's thug; and more.

6 CORRESPONDENCE

8 CASUAL
Andrew Ferguson grills himself.

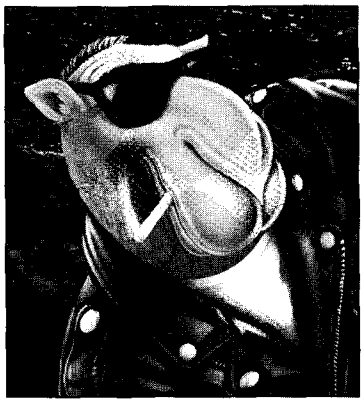
9 EDITORIAL
Wake Up!

11 I APOLOGIZE
Fun is having to say you're sorry. *by* **P.J. O'Rourke**

12 SUICIDE IN THE WEST
Death and deceit in Oregon. *by* **Wesley J. Smith**

14 CLINTON REPUBLICANS
A GOP befuddled by the president. *by* **Ramesh Ponnuru**

40 PARODY



16 A DEAL THAT DESERVES TO DIE
Big Government meets Big Tobacco—and it's a Big Mess. *by* **James K. Glassman**

19 THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE
In today's schools: readin', writin', and anti-smokin' indoctrination. *by* **Tucker Carlson**

23 RUSSIA'S REMARKABLE RISE
At age seven, the new Russia is doing a lot better than expected. *by* **Leon Aron**

Books & Arts

31 NARNIA BUSINESS C.S. Lewis at 100. *by* **Alan Jacobs**

35 ANTS AND UNCLES Bernard Werber's curious *Empire of the Ants*. *by* **J. Bottum**

36 IN THE HEART OF TEXAS Bob Wills and the rise of western swing. *by* **Brian Murray**

38 BIRTH OF A NATION Ernest Gellner's reflection on nationalism. *by* **Kevin Driscoll**

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The Audit Bureau Member

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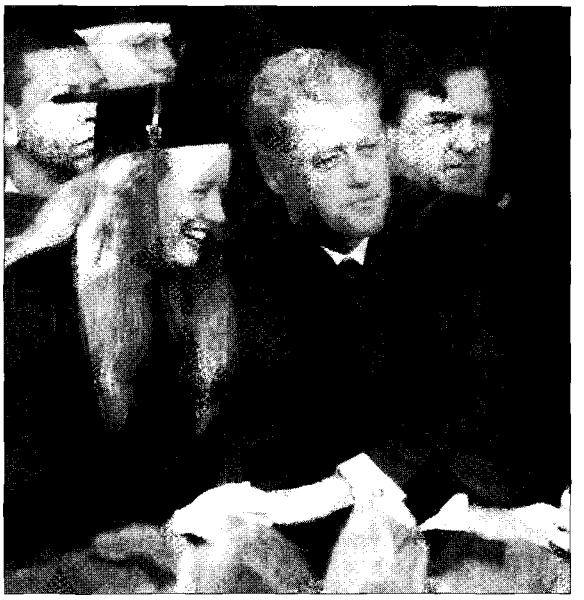
The Man From Grope, Part Deux

Three weeks ago on this page, The Scrapbook published a frame from an ABC News video capturing candidate Bill Clinton in what looked like an overly affectionate posture with a flight attendant on his campaign plane, "Longhorn One." Many, many readers of this page called The Scrapbook for a copy of the video, which, alas, has been lent for the time being to a different tentacle of the vast right-wing conspiracy. However, if The Scrapbook receives enough inquiries, a joint-licensing deal may be negotiated with ABC to market the smoking tape. Meantime, loyal reader Col. Merle H. Boyce, Retired ("they can't do anything to me now"), of Tustin, Calif., directs The Scrapbook's attention to the photo reproduced here. It appears to show President Clinton enjoying a special moment with the UC-San Diego student-body president, Coleen Sabatini, at last June's commencement ceremonies.



On the basis of this second photo, The Scrapbook is prepared to offer a free gift subscription to readers who can provide further photographic evidence of our president's enthusiasm for what is known in the jargon of campaign professionals as the "grip and grin."

Luntz's Labours Lost

One of the least edifying spectacles in Washington these days (always excepting the White House) is watching Republican contortions over what to say about the presidential zipper problems. Newt Gingrich counsels his colleagues to stay mum; Arlen Specter gives aid and comfort to the Clintonistas; Dick Armey (following Tom DeLay's lead) lectures schoolchildren on the shamelessness of the president.

But if you're looking for the epicenter of GOP confusion, look no further than Frank Luntz, the consultant who takes credit for having drafted the Contract With America. Luntz, who makes a living putting words into the mouths of lawmakers, has given very strict orders to Republicans in Congress on how to talk about Clinton and scandal. The only problem is, he keeps changing those orders.

Just days after the Monica Lewinsky affair broke, Luntz rushed out a memo to congressional Republicans calling on them to "refrain from commenting on the latest allegation against President Clinton." Why? Because, wrote Luntz, "if you comment, you will take a nonpartisan, non-political situation and make it both partisan and political."

Fast-forward to late March. Luntz, in a "confidential" memorandum widely distributed to reporters, changed his tune. "To everything, there is a season," waxed Luntz, so "the season of silence must end." Luntz argued that Republicans did the right thing by not rushing to judgment (read: following his original advice), but now "it would be wrong to allow Bill Clinton to escape responsibility for his actions." As a service to Republicans, Luntz also included two pages of questions for them to ask in public. Included were gems like "When will Americans finally hear the truth?" and "What example is Bill Clinton setting for our children?"

Stop the presses! Luntz has now changed his tune again. As of the first week in April, he believes Republicans should focus on policy disputes they have with the president, emphasizing tax reform, the IRS, and Social Security. "Some Republicans keep waiting for the other shoe to drop on Clinton," Luntz told the *New York Times*. But "Bill Clinton is a survivor." Yes, and among the many other things he's survived is Frank Luntz's advice.

Decade of the 401k

If the 1980s were the decade of greed, then the 1990s must be the decade of the 401k plan. How else to explain the fact that, in the orgy of celebration last week

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Scrapbook

over the Dow Jones Industrial average's breaking 9000, not a peep was heard from America's liberals about their old bugaboo, Wall Street excess? The '90s, of course, have been even kinder to investors than the '80s. Only now, we have moral paragons in the White House, unlike during the benighted 1980s.

Oops, there was one peep. The *Washington Post* ran a front-page story that did recall the old days of stern, liberal egalitarianism: "Boom Is Fine—If You Own Stock; The Millions Who Don't Are Only Falling Further Behind," read the headline. This is the sort of journalistic spin that used to greet every piece of good news in the Reagan era. In the spirit of *Schadenfreude*, THE SCRAPBOOK looks forward to similar journalistic treatment of Clinton-era good news: "Unemployment Rates Down—But Those Without Jobs Are Still Unemployed." "Interest Rates Down—Loan Sharks Hurting." Or, "Fewer Murders in Big Apple—But Those Who Were Killed Are Still Dead."

FARRAKHAN UPDATE

Jude Wanniski—the supply-side propagandist, Jack Kemp ventriloquist, and flack extraordinaire for Louis Farrakhan—has been noticeably mum of late about his Nation of Islam friends. Perhaps they balked at accepting the central role of the Smoot-Hawley tariff in the history of 20th-century civilization? Or maybe Wanniski is having second thoughts about the political viability of his GOP-Black Muslim alliance.

That would be understandable. Two weeks ago Farrakhan named a new security chief for his Harlem mosque, the mosque that was once guided by Malcolm X. Farrakhan's new man in Harlem? One Muhammad Abdul Aziz, who served 20 years in prison for participating in the assassination of Malcolm X. Aziz was paroled in 1985 and, in the classic phrase of the *New York Times*, "has always maintained that he was innocent." The convicted killer will be in charge of security and training at all of Farrakhan's East Coast mosques.

Atonement is a wonderful thing.

ENGLISH TAUGHT HERE

The "English for the Children" ballot initiative that Californians will vote on in June is looking like a juggernaut. The latest poll numbers show overwhelming support for the initiative, which promises to end the disastrous two-decade experiment in bilingual education in the state's public schools. A statewide Field poll shows support among likely voters at 70 percent. Latino voters, who certain brain-dead California Republican leaders once thought would be annoyed by the initiative, are supporting it 61 percent to 34 percent. Turns out just about everyone wants the children of California to learn English. Only the education establishment, which supped for years on bilingualism grants while children failed to learn English, is reluctant to get on board.

HELP WANTED

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Correspondence

The Evil that Men Do

David Gelernter assails the flaccid public morality that failed to react to the Unabomber's crimes with appropriate horror and condemnation ("Unresolved Evil," April 6). He is right about that. He is right that "we need to hear the crowd (hear *ourselves*) praising good and denouncing evil."

Gelernter denounces evil to great effect, but the one striking good in the Unabomber case goes by unpraised. Gelernter says about the Unabomber, "We found the man and put him away." That is untrue, according to the accounts I have read. Kaczynski's brother informed against him; otherwise he would not have been found at all. The brother's act, in which principled citizenship won out over the claims of blood, over natural fraternal feeling, and over the scorn that was to be expected from those who instinctively despise a man who "rats on his own brother," is a shining achievement of moral heroism.

Gelernter's statement, "Goodness is unnatural and we need to cheer one another on," is especially true in this instance. Perhaps the reason the Unabomber escaped the death penalty derived, as Gelernter thinks, from a collective failure to denounce evil. Nevertheless, that he escaped the death penalty was right: Society owed it to the brother's extraordinary moral courage to "cheer him on" by not making him the agent of his own brother's death. The sentence imposed, whatever the considerations that actually led to it, justly united the condemnation of evil and the praise of good.

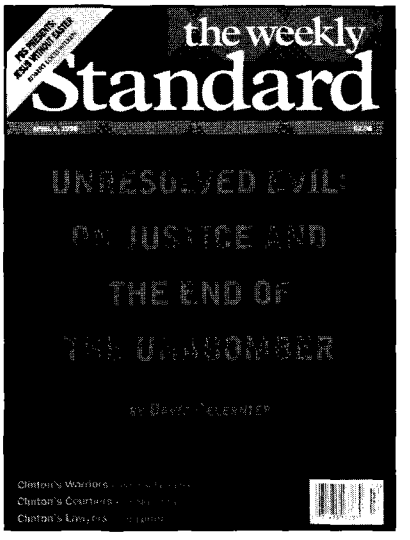
MERRILL ORNE YOUNG
SURRY, VA

Batting a Dead Horse

Could we please have a moratorium on pieces about how baseball (a) is a conservative sport, (b) used to be a conservative sport, (c) may once again become a conservative sport, or (d) remains somewhat more conservative than football (though not nearly as conservative as it ought to be)? I'm willing to stipulate that the editors of THE WEEKLY STANDARD are regular guys who have lives and care about more than just policy. You can even write about your cars if you want. But *no more baseball.*

TERRY TEACHOUT
NEW YORK, NY

Arguments for and against the designated hitter's contribution are generally supportable with statistics, one of the baseball writer's basic tools. Christopher Caldwell discusses strategy and the extension of players' careers ("A DHumb Idea at 25," April 13). But there is another facet rarely talked about: the pursuit of perfection. For the most part, pitchers as batters are only attempting to look respectable. In rare



instances, they may actually swing bats like AA players. But they are directed to the next half-inning, or else they wouldn't be at the plate. I pay major-league prices to see major-league performance. Compromising perfection, even one time out of nine, is not major league.

PAUL S. BRIDGE
ELLICOTT CITY, MD

Monkey Muddle

Dean Ellen O' Neill's memorandum to the Borough of Manhattan Community College ("Not a Parody," March 30) contains four or five apologies for referring to a childhood game, "monkey in the middle," when addressing in a jocular fashion a staff member whose physical presence alone was sufficient to add diversity and cultural enrichment to that college community. Such abject groveling to save one's neck would not be out of place in the old imperial Chinese court; in 1998, it probably saved her job.

JAMES G. BAIRD
WOODSTOCK, GA

About that Chin Thing . . .

It seems to me that the Clinton cover photo (March 30) is not the look of arrogance you imply. Rather, I think it's simply the look of a mouth-breather who, when a wide-open smile would be inappropriate, is trying to hold his breath so that he can keep his mouth closed and avoid the village-idiot look. Perhaps this explains why he has developed into such an effective speaker. Talking permitted him to keep his mouth open—and so he gave himself much more practice than the rest of us.

WILBUR W. HITCHCOCK
ATLANTA, GA

More Evil Under the Sun

John Podhoretz, with whom I usually disagree, is exactly right and deeply insightful in his review of *Primary Colors* ("Primary Black & White," March 30). Seeing this film made me want to re-watch some of the great films about insane evil, whether personal or political, such as *Touch of Evil*, *Night of the Hunter*, and *All the King's Men*. When Podhoretz is right, he's very right.

LLOYD EBY
CHEVERLY, MD

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In spite of what the local phone companies say, controlling 98% of the market seems like a monopoly to me.

In my old country, when the propaganda stated that we were free to make choices, common sense told us otherwise. We were under their control, plain and simple.

Here in America, my local phone company says there is competition because it has agreements with competitors. What they don't tell you is that they've made sure there is no affordable way for their competitors to reach customers like me. If they still control 98% of the market, how can there be fair competition?

Common sense. Propaganda. Ivan knows the difference.

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Casual

Up in Smoke

We all mark the arrival of spring in our own ways. For me, the season has officially sprung when the cherry blossoms bloom, George Will writes his first-of-the-year baseball column (like the cherry blossoms, he burst forth early this year), and I decide, on some happy, unexpected afternoon, to lift the door of my spooky garage and wheel out my Weber grill.

This is a matter of some seriousness with me, though one filled with pleasant anticipation, too. My heart never fails to leap up when I haul the Weber into the backyard, raise the black dome, survey the accumulated spiderwebs and leaves and muck of its winter hibernation, and yell to my son that he really should do something worthwhile for once in his miserable life and get out here and clean the damn grill. He always ignores me, of course—he's only seven—so I clean it myself, with grim purposefulness. But my labor is leavened with fancies of meals to come: burgers and ribs and luscious steaks, smoky and juicy and flecked with chunks of unhygienic crud because I never clean the grill properly. Spring has sprung!

Barbecuing is the main reason I moved our family from a city apartment to a house in the suburbs. I'm exaggerating only a little. The city's rotting schools, crushing taxes, and general seediness also had something to do with it. But cooking on an open grill, generating enormous clouds of atmospheric particulates for the sake of dinner, seemed to me an essential manifestation of the freedom that is our birthright as Americans, and my neighbors were furious when I would do this in my apartment. In my new neighborhood, by contrast, I at once found a kindred spirit in the fellow next door. He was a Democrat, which meant that he grilled only fish and vegetables, but he knew his way around a Weber, and he instilled in me what pompous actors—which is to say, actors—call a sense of craft.

My neighbor's devotion to the Weber grill, *qua* Weber grill, was deep and undying. He despised gas grills. There was nothing he couldn't make a Weber do except sit, fetch, and roll over, and like the pudgy master in *Kung Fu,* he passed on many of his secrets to me. He taught me, for example, how to sprinkle dampened wood chips on the coals to produce maximum smoke. (And his wife worked for the EPA!) He got me to buy a stovepipe cylinder for the coals, which hastens the burning. From him I learned to test wind direction before lighting the fire, to optimize the flow of air through the Weber's bottom vents; he even drew me a diagram to demonstrate the aerodynamic principles involved. And marinades? My neighbor knew marinades. And now I do too.

But he moved away. And over the two springs since his departure my own attachment to the Weber—which was, like his, cultish in intensity—has slackened a good deal. An uncomfortable truth has slowly dawned: Charcoal grills are terrifically inconvenient. The coals themselves are dusty and . . . well, they're very black, and so are your hands after you handle them. The large amount of time it takes to prepare the grill and the coals and the woodchips, which I once enjoyed because it pleasantly lengthened the cocktail hour, now merely tries my patience because I'm trying to cut back on gin. The grill itself is difficult to keep in fighting trim and, as noted, absolutely impossible to get my son to clean.

The other day my wife, sensing my change of heart, dropped one of her mail-order catalogues in my lap. It was open to a page covered with pictures of happy yuppies cooing with self-satisfaction, looking as though they'd just looted the Ralph Lauren warehouse. And there in the center of the page was the object of their cooing: the largest gas grill I've ever seen. The picture was pornographic in its detail; you could hear the steaks sizzle and hiss. This grill was more than a grill. It transcended grillness. It had twin rangetop burners, a rotisserie, a built-in smoker system, a double boiler. I looked closer. My God—a wok!

My pulse quickened. The possibilities were endless. A new grill would mean I could prepare lavish meals. It would mean variety—rich sauces, inventive toppings, stir-fried vegetables and other delicately prepared side dishes. It would mean a cornucopia of nature's fruits and meats. It would mean a happy, satisfied family. It would mean . . .

. . . more work for me! I snapped the catalogue shut and went out to the backyard. Sunlight filtered through the green traces of trees, and birds flitted from limb to limb. The Weber stood with its dome off, half-clean, just as I'd left it. "Hey!" I shouted to my son. "Get out here! This thing is filthy!" He ignored me and I grabbed the scrub brush to continue my rite of spring.

Andrew Ferguson

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the weekly Standard

WAKE UP!

Washington's resistance to the poisons of Clintonism has dramatically deteriorated since the Paula Jones lawsuit was dismissed by Judge Susan Webber Wright on April 1.

For instance. Flying home from Africa on Air Force One the next day, President Clinton sat down for a little post-Paula victory chat with Walter Isaacson of *Time* magazine, lately the most embarrassingly White House-friendly of newsweeklies. Midway through this dopey, softball conversation ("Is there a part of you that regrets not being able to go to court to try to prove your version of events?"), Isaacson did manage, timidly and elliptically, to question Clinton about something real.

The president has made a momentous, deviously indefensible decision to shield White House aides Bruce Lindsey and Sidney Blumenthal from grand-jury questions about their knowledge of the Monica Lewinsky cover-up. What's the deal with your executive-privilege claim, Walter Isaacson wondered? *I don't know*, the president responded, incredibly enough: "I think you have to ask my counsel's office, because the first time I learn about a lot of these legal arguments is when I see them in the paper." Um, "How can that be," Mr. President, sir? Clinton: "I'm just not going to talk about that."

Oh. Okay.

And okay, too, it seems, for nonsense from Paul Begala, special assistant to the president for peccadillo protection. Questioned a few days later about Clinton's assertion of executive privilege by ABC's Cokie Roberts, Begala managed to maintain straightfaced that it may not have happened: "None of us in this room really know whether it has been asserted or what it has been asserted over. It is a hypothetical matter right now." This is the general White House line: Every single piece of the incontrovertible evidence that the president of the United States is a lawless, lecherous liar—every last scrap—is a mirage.

Executive privilege is a mirage. Gennifer Flowers is a mirage. Paula Jones is a mirage. Monica Lewinsky is a mirage. Monica Lewinsky's gifts from the president, and job offers from his friends, are a mirage. Monica Lewinsky's talking points for Linda Tripp on how to file a false affidavit are a mirage. Linda Tripp's tapes are a mirage. Kathleen Willey is a mirage. Hillary Clinton's billing records and cattle-futures windfall are a mirage. The Travel Office fiasco is a mirage. The FBI-files fiasco is a mirage. The felony Whitewater convictions of Jim Guy Tucker and Jim and Susan McDougal are a mirage. The president's perjury about all this, and the organized effort of his senior aides to conceal it from view—that, too, is a mirage.

(Former Miss America Elizabeth Ward Gracen is not a mirage, exactly. Yes, it turns out the president falsely denied having sex with her. But it also turns out the sex was consensual. What a relief!)

Have we left anything out? Yes, we have. The construction of this impossibly large and complicated mirage is a deliberate plot. The "whole thing," as James Carville is routinely invited to bellow on the network talk shows, is a "put-up job by the right wing," which has raised a "massive, massive amount of money" so that it might "pay people to tell lies about the president."

For the longest time, Hillary Clinton's cynically fabulist claims about a "vast, right-wing conspiracy" to destroy her husband were just that: cynically fabulist claims, graveyard-whistle murmurings restricted to the most loopily partisan of Clinton sycophants. And establishment Washington treated the murmurings with amused derision. But this kookiness is no longer merely desperate, gassy spin. Last week, the possible existence of a vast, right-wing anti-Clinton conspiracy was for the first time given the legitimacy of official government attention. The Department of Justice, which by tradition is supposed to be the least loopy and least partisan of federal agencies, formally initiated an investigation into charges that Kenneth Starr's chief Whitewater witness, former Little Rock municipal judge David Hale, was paid for his testimony by conservative philanthropist Richard Mellon Scaife—with money funneled through the offices of the conservative *American Spectator* magazine.

And what is the worst of it? The worst of it is that establishment Washington has greeted the astounding fact of this investigation with nary a word of complaint, much less derisive laughter. Indeed, you can

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scour the nation's major dailies and not find the slightest hint that there is anything out of the ordinary here—either about the allegation itself, or about the process by which Janet Reno's "people's law firm" has come to take it seriously.

David Hale has been friends for 30 years with a man named Parker Dozhier. Between 1994 and 1996, Hale occasionally visited Dozhier's cabin in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Hale was cooperating with the independent counsel's Whitewater investigation at the time. And Dozhier was receiving $1,000 a month from the *Spectator*—Scaife money, originally—for clipping local newspapers and providing other legwork services in support of the magazine's Clinton coverage. Last month, an on-line publication called *Salon* reported that two people, a woman named Caryn Mann and her 17-year-old son, Josh Rand, claim to have seen Dozhier hand Hale up to $200,000 in cash. Dozhier and Hale and the *Spectator* all vigorously deny it. The Office of the Independent Counsel has no reason to believe it.

WHAT *SALON* CALLS "HEADQUARTERS FOR A SOPHISTICATED, WELL-FINANCED OPERATION AIMED AT DISCREDTING THE PRESIDENT" IS IN FACT A BAIT SHOP.

This is what the Department of Justice wants to get to the bottom of. Except that there is no bottom. The scene of the crime—what *Salon* dramatically calls "headquarters for a sophisticated, well-financed operation aimed at discrediting the president of the United States"—is actually Dozhier's Bait Shop and Rainbow Landing. Parker Dozhier sells worms for a living. And Caryn Mann is his disgruntled ex-girlfriend, an astrologist who has elsewhere claimed to have telepathically directed U.S. troop movements during the Persian Gulf War. And she has since acknowledged that she did *not* see Dozhier give Hale any money; only her son did.

And after Mann broke up with Dozhier, she went to work for the private-detective firm that earlier this year tailed a Little Rock woman falsely rumored to be having an affair with Ken Starr. And the payments she says Dozhier made to Hale did not begin until *after* Hale had told his story about Whitewater to the FBI and the national media—and *before* Starr was ever appointed independent counsel.

And the only reason we're now talking about this thinly plotted charge at all is that one of *Salon*'s reporters, Murray Waas, phoned up former senator David Pryor, current chairman of Clinton's legal-defense fund, to tip him off about it. And Pryor then somehow managed to intercede with the FBI, which somehow allowed itself to interview Mann and Rand as "witnesses."

Got it? The teenage son of a worm merchant's odd-ball ex-girlfriend tells a tall tale to a credulous, free-lance conspiracy theorist. Who repeats it to a member of the Clinton mafia. Who tells it to the FBI. Whose field report induces the Department of Justice to prostitute itself to the interests of the president's public-relations campaign.

Oh. Okay. That seems a reasonable law-enforcement effort. But Bill Clinton's obstruction of justice? Time to wrap that thing up.

One measure of Washington's paralysis before all this systemic chicanery is the reaction to something Rep. Dick Armey said early last week. Armey told a group of Dallas-area students that Bill Clinton is a "shameless person" whose "basic credo in life is, 'I will do whatever I can get away with.'" Armey also allowed that if *he* were Bill Clinton, living under the same weight of damning evidence, he would resign from the White House. Armey's remarks were treated as a gaffe.

But Armey's remarks were *true*, as true as any could be. We like to think that law and public opinion work to restrain our politicians from misdeeds and dishonesty. The last few years have proved something very different—and unpleasant. The law is weak and manipulable. The public is inattentive to detail and reluctant to believe the worst about its leaders.

Washington politics, in other words, on a daily basis, must be a largely self-refereed game. You are supposed to call your own fouls. When it becomes undeniable that you have disgraced yourself, you are supposed to accept your humiliation and leave the scene. This is what Richard Nixon did, before he could be indicted or impeached. This is what Bill Clinton will never do. He will not obey the rules. He is, literally, shameless.

Nobody in Washington is quite sure what to do about this. So for the moment people have decided not to do much of anything at all. They have decided to wait and see. Silently. Maybe a fat report from Kenneth Starr to the House Judiciary Committee will finally do the trick?

But Mr. Starr's credibility, alas, has been unfairly but effectively besmirched by the White House attack team. He cannot pull this off by himself. The only alternative is for more people in Washington—lots more people in Washington—to snap themselves awake from the hypnotic spell of Bill Clinton's shamelessness and do what Dick Armey briefly did last week. Speak the truth, loudly and in a hurry.

—David Tell, for the Editors

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I Apologize

by P. J. O'Rourke

I'D JUST LIKE TO APOLOGIZE TO EVERYBODY for everything. There, I feel better already. I never realized how fabulous apologies were until I saw David Brock atone on every TV talk show, watched President Clinton *mea culpa* his way around Africa, read Newt Gingrich's new humble pie of a book, and listened to the pope say "oops" about the Holocaust. My fault if I ever doubted the wisdom or intelligence of any of you guys.

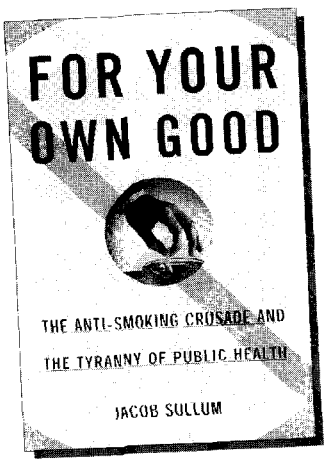
I'm so glad I discovered apologies. I mean, I knew they worked around the house—when accompanied by gifts of jewelry. (I'm going to buy the world some earrings. And if I don't I'll be really ashamed of myself.) But what I didn't know about apologies is how the public hungers for them, how they bring joy into the lives of others. I used to do any evil thing I wanted, and I didn't care if it caused hurt feelings or global warming, as long as I got attention. I can't believe how self-centered I was. Now I just say I wish I hadn't done those things, and a delighted public hangs on my every word.

And, in the future, if I hurt others' feelings or warm up the globe some more, I don't even have to keep quiet about it. I can tell everyone. And I'm not rubbing it in. I'm becoming a better person, like David, Bill, Newt, and John Paul II.

I'm very excited about becoming a better person. Not only do I get a lot of attention, but it's cheaper than paying damages or replacing the earth's oxygen supply. At first, I was worried that becoming a better person through apologizing would mean inventing new evil things to do and my wife wouldn't let me. I was being silly. I apologize. There are all sorts of terrible deeds that were done ages ago to people who've been dead for years. I can apologize for those. There's nobody around to tell me to stuff it. And, while the men who actually sold slaves and killed Indians burn in hell, I can enjoy jazz and soul food and buy a summer place on the Vineyard without being attacked by Narragansetts. (Some people claim apologies are empty!)

I can also apologize for general things that cannot be blamed on a specific individual—such as me—but that a specific individual—such as me—can get credit

"I'd walk a mile for this book."*



In ***For Your Own Good***, award-winning journalist Jacob Sullum examines the major themes of the anti-smoking movement, showing that tobacco's contemporary opponents echo complaints first expressed centuries ago. Today, under the banner of "public health," they say the government has a right and an obligation to eliminate tobacco consumption once and for all. Sullum argues that such a use of state power is illegitimate and dangerous, threatening the freedom of anyone who dares to trade longevity for pleasure.

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— Florence King, *National Review* columnist

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— James K. Glassman, *The New York Post*

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for regretting. I apologize for racism, sexism, and religious bigotry plus discrimination based on age, physical ability, and whether you're wearing little, lacy items under your three-piece suit. I apologize for poverty, crime, social injustice, damage to the Amazon rainforest, and inhumane treatment of farm animals. I apologize for certain harsher aspects of Hammurabi's Code and El Niño.

But a good apology needs a personal touch. So I apologize for being a right-wing journalist. I apologize for the vicious, hurtful things I've written, especially the true things. Those must have really hurt, because I'm a truth-telling sort of fellow. The fact that I'm apologizing proves it.

Note how everything David Brock has to say is now believable. Although I don't know where David Brock comes off thinking he's so vicious and hurtful. Teasing Anita Hill? There's a slow-moving target for a mudball. Finking on the president's sex life? Move the fielders inside the baselines. Easy out. Then Brock cuddles up to Hillary like she's Piglet in *Winnie the Pooh*. When I get game in my sights, it's pork chops, it's bacon, it's scrapple. I aim the rifle of Philippic, load with bullets of calumny, and pull a trigger of pure bile. (Which reminds me, I apologize for assault weapons.)

Reputations lie slaughtered all around me. I am bloodied to the eyes with the gore of partisan journalism. I have something to apologize *for*—not like that Bill Clinton in Africa repenting slavery. As if. The Clintons couldn't afford shoes. When Bill wants to make amends he should say he's sorry for 300 years of chicken thieving, blind-eye moonshine, and cars up on blocks in the front yards.

Don't go getting above yourself, Bill. My family had property. We were people of substance in the antebellum days. We didn't happen to own slaves because we were in Illinois, but that was an oversight. I'll do the apologizing around here. And let me take this opportunity to apologize to Native Americans, again, for stealing their land. Excuse me. I promise to lose at blackjack in one of your new casinos.

Bill Clinton does have one thing going for him, and saying "pardon me for the way it's behaving" should keep him busy for the rest of his life. But who cares? He's a lame duck, he's married to Piglet from *Winnie the Pooh*, and the only friend he's got left is David Brock. Who wants an apology from someone like that? Not for nothing does the common wisdom hold that "It takes a big man to apologize." And forget it, Newt. Going off your diet won't work. Talk to the pope—sin's the ticket.

Yes, sin—glamorous, macho sin—I've decided that's the secret of the perfect apology and becoming a better person. Nobody would read St. Augustine's *Confessions* if the saint had spent his youth attending meetings of the Carthage High School Good Government Club.

The great apologist has to have lived large and wild. If he's going to kiss the world's boo-boos and make up, he'd better plant some bruises first. A master apologizer has to be a Lord Byron, a Rick in *Casablanca*, a Lee Atwater, anyway. And I make some pretty damn excellent apologies myself. But that's bragging. Sorry.

P.J. O'Rourke is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

SUICIDE IN THE WEST

by Wesley J. Smith

WHEN EUTHANASIA ENTHUSIASTS urged Oregon voters to legalize assisted suicide, they promised an open, rational, and carefully regulated system in which physician-hastened death would be a "last resort." Voters were also assured that life termination would be conducted under the watchful and protective eye of the state, with rigorous guidelines strictly enforced to prevent abuse. Assisted suicide was to be only an adjunct to hospice and other beneficent forms of care for the dying. All in all, no cause for concern.

It hasn't turned out that way. After twice being approved by voters and surviving a Supreme Court challenge, Oregon's assisted-suicide regime is now in place. The first deaths were administered in March. And already it is clear that the suicide-advocates deceived voters. Oregon has shrouded the suicide procedure in secrecy. The state collects statistics after the fact, when it is too late to prevent abuses. And ideologues who favor the new law control the release of information.

Openness became the first casualty of the new law. The Oregon Health Division decreed in December that secrecy would be the suicide bureaucracy's guiding principle. The only information that will be released publicly will be brief and nonspecific statistical data. Absolutely no information will be released

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about the time or place of any individual assisted suicide. The identities of those killed under the law will remain confidential. Death certificates will not list assisted suicide as a cause of death. The circumstances of individuals whose lives are ended through lethal prescriptions will not be disclosed. Bureaucrats who violate the gag order will be fired. All of this means, of course, that there will be no effective oversight and no way for the public to judge how the law works.

As if that weren't enough, the Oregon Medical Association has sued the Oregon Board of Pharmacy in an effort to impose even greater secrecy. The medical association is angry at the board for requiring doctors to identify prescriptions intended for lethal use. The regulation is necessary to effectuate the assisted suicide law's "conscience clause," which permits medical professionals who don't want to participate in the killing of patients to opt out. Doctors, of course, can easily exercise the conscience clause by just saying no. But pharmacists will be unable to exercise their rights under the law unless they know which prescriptions have a killing purpose. The medical association contends that its lawsuit merely seeks to protect patient confidentiality. But the secrecy litigation probably has more to do with the desire of doctors who kill patients not to leave a paper trail. And if the doctors prevail over the pharmacists, acts of assisted suicide will be virtually impossible to monitor effectively.

The shroud of secrecy gives a virtual information monopoly to organizations favoring assisted suicide, which intend to manipulate the Oregon experience into a propaganda tool to push their cause nationwide. Toward that end, a Portland organization misnamed Compassion in Dying—an offshoot of the Hemlock Society formed initially in the state of Washington to participate in clandestine, illegal assisted suicides—held a press conference in late March to announce the first legal assisted killing in the United States, of an unidentified woman who had cancer, painting the death in a warm hue. Not to be outdone, the Hemlock Society of Oregon quickly reported that it too had helped a woman with cancer find a doctor willing to assist in her suicide. Lacking any other data about these cases and starved for information about how the Oregon law is actually working, the media jumped on the story, duly reporting the spin of the pro-suicide groups.

This lock on the news allows Compassion in Dying and Hemlock to subvert objective journalism by releasing only those stories they believe will further the cause of assisted suicide. At the same time, it can be safely presumed that assisted suicides resulting in agonizing deaths or extended coma, which Hemlock Society co-founder Derek Humphry has warned will occur in approximately 25 percent of all cases, will not be disclosed. Nor in such cases is Compassion in Dying or Hemlock likely to issue a press release advising that a family member was forced to suffocate a loved one with a plastic bag—the Humphry prescription for completing "failed" assisted suicides—since that would expose their advocacy agenda to well-deserved criticism.

Ironically, the information that *was* released by Compassion in Dying and Hemlock about the first two deaths inadvertently revealed what thin protection is provided by the assisted suicide law's "protective guidelines." Assisted suicide, Oregonians were told, would only be performed in the context of a long-term meaningful relationship between doctor and suicidal patient. This assurance proved false from the starting gate. The personal physicians of both women *refused* to participate in their killings. But this proved to be no impediment. The women simply called Compassion in Dying and Hemlock, which referred them to doctors who were willing to administer the lethal drugs, despite having no long-term relationship with the patients.

Not only that: The woman whose death was announced by Compassion in Dying appears to have been depressed when she pursued self-destruction; this, despite continual assurances from suicide advocates that the lives of depressed people would be protected by the law's guidelines. According to Compassion in Dying's report, the woman they "helped" sought them out for a referral because two physicians had refused to prescribe a lethal dose, with at least one of these doctors specifically diagnosing depression. But what the personal physician viewed as depression, suicide-advocate Dr. Peter Goodwin, medical director of Compassion in Dying, blithely dismissed as mere frustration. Goodwin referred the woman to a rubber-stamp death doctor willing to write the lethal prescription despite the personal physician's diagnosis.

Further evidence of the woman's depression is found on a tape recording she left behind, which Compassion in Dying, stealing a page from Jack Kevorkian's book, played for the media at its press conference. On the tape, the woman is heard to say that she wanted assisted suicide not because of pain but to be "relieved of all the stress" at being informed her disease had entered a terminal stage. This statement gives strong support to the original diagnosis of depression. And whether the woman was clinically depressed or not, the stress and emotional toll of dying are difficulties that hospice programs and other end-of-life caregivers are quite adept at treating and alleviating. No matter. Compassion in Dying referred the woman to a death doctor rather than to a physi-

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cian who would aggressively treat her emotional difficulties.

The assisted-suicide law has also begun to poison Oregon's Medicaid system. Oregon taxpayers recently were told that they are going to have to pay for the assisted suicides of poor people, something advocates for legalized killing somehow neglected to mention previously. In an Orwellian twist of the language, the governing board of Oregon's Medicaid voted 10 to 1 to declare assisted suicide a form of "comfort care."

This is highly ironic. Oregon, the only state to legalize assisted suicide, is also the only state that rations medical care to Medicaid recipients. Comfort care, which used to comprise pain control and other symptom alleviation, is covered under Oregon Medicaid. But curative treatment for seriously ill people is sometimes denied—for example, treatment of late-stage cancer patients. Imagine the scenario: A cancer patient on Medicaid wants treatment not covered by the rationing plan. Denied treatment because she cannot pay for it herself, feeling hopeless and desperate, she turns instead to assisted suicide. The same doctor who refused to treat her because she did not have the money to pay can now hasten her death courtesy of Oregon taxpayers. And if that doctor refuses to help her kill herself, Compassion in Dying will happily refer her to a doctor who will.

Oregon is demonstrating that assisted suicide corrupts all it touches. In the few brief months in which doctors have been empowered to kill, freedom of information has been stifled, taxpayers have been told by state bureaucrats that they must foot the bill for the assisted suicides of poor people, and the media have been manipulated like wooden marionettes. Worse, two women are dead prematurely who might have changed their minds about self-destruction had they received suicide prevention, hospice intervention, treatment for depression, and other appropriate end-of-life care.

Wesley J. Smith, an attorney for the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force, is the author of **Forced Exit: The Slippery Slope From Assisted Suicide to Legalized Murder** *(Times Books).*

Clinton Republicans

by Ramesh Ponnuru

Republicans have almost as many facile explanations for President Clinton's success as he does for the allegations against him. They credit—i.e., blame—his personal emotive skills, shameless dissembling, and sheer good luck. They complain about a biased press, that hoary excuse for conservative failure, while accepting the conventional wisdom of that same press about their "overreaching" during Newt's Days of Rage in 1995. They console themselves with Republican electoral victories in state capitols and in Congress and brag that they are setting the agenda, that the tides of history are still on their side.

But Republicans don't really believe their own bluster. Just look at their legislative calendar, with its record low number of days in session. It's a schedule that reflects a congressional majority more worried about the November elections than confident about its ability to enact laws. Legislatively, conservatives are going to spend most of this year playing defense, blocking bad ideas on the minimum wage, campaign-finance reform, health care, and spending.

Nobody in the GOP can be happy with this state of affairs. Not the congressional leaders, not the backbenchers who hold those leaders in contempt, not the activists who will probably soon weary of the backbenchers too, not the conservative voters who wonder why nothing much is happening.

Perhaps all of them should, for the first time, consider the possibility that it is the substance of Clinton's politics that accounts for his success and the Republican paralysis. Political observers tend to scoff at the notion that Clinton's politics has any substance. But Clintonism exists, and it is both a reasonably coherent program and a powerful political formula. So powerful that it may outlast Clinton himself.

If one were to define Clintonism in a phrase, it would be something like "cultural moderation combined with government activism for the middle class." Clintonism differs from McGovern-Dukakis liberalism in that it coldly jettisoned the latter's cultural baggage on race, sex, crime, and welfare. But Clintonism is not the same as the politics of a New Democrat, since it demagogically opposes entitlement reform and indeed seeks to extend the entitlement strategy of hooking the middle class on government.

Clinton ran on this platform in 1992 and won. During his first two years in office, he wandered away from it—think of gays in the military, Joycelyn Elders, the urban stimulus, and crime bills—and Democrats paid the price. He returned to the success-

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ful formula defensively in 1995-96, and more aggressively since then. It has worked like a charm.

Its success should have taught conservatives that they have overestimated public resistance to big government per se; what the public rejects is big government tied to liberal cultural values. By breaking that link, Clinton is relegitimizing government activism. It's on probation now, so the president must think small, but several more years of good behavior will earn it freer rein. If the Democrats keep practicing Clintonism, they will be able to move on to the more ambitious projects of which they never seem to have a shortage.

Republicans have responded to Clintonism by grabbing the nearest security blanket: the memory of Ronald Reagan's career. But they have in fact misremembered that career. Many Republican officeholders, thinking of Reagan's geniality and optimism, have adopted a politics of blurred edges and feel-good gestures that is actually modeled on Bill Clinton. The logical candidate of the Clinton Republicans is Elizabeth Dole, someone with no distinct political profile who can run for talk-show-host-in-chief.

A second response, favored by conservative activists and intellectuals, cites Reagan's fixed ideological positions, but in fact harks back to Barry Goldwater. Reagan applied conservative philosophy to specific problems facing the country in the late 1970s: stagflation, the energy crisis, the Soviet threat. Goldwater offered a set of Platonic ideals culled from conservative philosophy and blissfully unrelated to whatever conditions happened to obtain in America in 1964.

Today's conservatism has again become anti-political in this sense, offering solutions in search of problems. The flat tax is a prime example. If the problem is inefficiency, it's hardly an urgent one; and if it is the tax code's complexity and compliance costs, simplification need not involve a single rate or lower taxes on savings. This is not necessarily to deny that the flat tax is desirable as an ideal, but to say that its present advocates are engaged in something other than politics. The logical candidate of the Goldwater Republicans, it need hardly be added, is Steve Forbes.

Some intellectuals will doubtless be tempted by this dismal scene to fashion a big-government conservatism. But a better alternative would be for conservatives to relearn how to think politically. And a first step would be to realize that Bill Clinton's two election victories were not just blips on a conservative trendline.

***Ramesh Ponnuru is national reporter for* National Review.**

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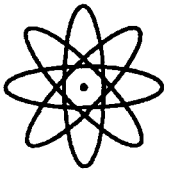

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A Deal That Deserves to Die

By James K. Glassman

At long last, the empire is striking back. The tobacco companies, which for months had acted like docile children in hopes that Congress would play nice with them and approve their June 20 settlement with states and plaintiffs' lawyers, came to their senses last week.

At the National Press Club on Wednesday, Steven F. Goldstone, the chairman of RJR Nabisco Holdings, Corp., said his company rejected legislation passed the week before by Sen. John McCain's Commerce Committee. The three other big tobacco companies quickly agreed.

Goldstone said he couldn't work with Congress. No kidding. The McCain bill, which passed the committee 19-1, would provide a flood of cash for Washington to spend—the single largest transfer ever from the private sector to the public. In all, the bill would cost between $500 billion and $600 billion over 25 years, up from $369 billion for the earlier settlement. "The money," as the *New York Times* delicately put it, "would go into a Government trust fund. The legislation does not specify how the money would be spent." Politicians of both parties are busy thinking up ways. For starters, in his new budget, President Clinton has already said he'll use $65 billion of the tobacco funds to fix school roofs and hire teachers.

Much of the money would come from taxes. According to McCain, the bill would raise the tax on a pack of cigarettes by $1.10 over five years, but Wall Street analysts figure the price of a pack would rise by twice that or more, as the companies pass on to consumers new punitive costs, like annual assessments in the first six years totaling $125 billion.

Morgan Stanley's David Adelman, for example, told clients that the bill would "result in a retail price increase of approximately $2.55 to $4.50 (vs. the current average retail price of $1.95)." And this tax increase would be borne disproportionately by already overtaxed blue-collar Americans—although some would avoid it by resorting to an inevitable black market. (A trailer truck carries 695,000 packs. If the seller can duck taxes, his profit on the cigarettes in one truck can range as high as $1.8 million.)

Households that make under $50,000 account for three-fourths of all spending on cigarettes, according to the federal Consumer Expenditure Survey for 1995. A Roper Center poll for CBS News in September found that, while 24 percent of all Americans smoke, the figure is 35 percent in families making less than $15,000 a year, 27 percent in families between $15,000 and $30,000, and just 15 percent in families over $75,000. Smokers tend to be white (25 percent of whites smoke) more than black (21 percent) or Hispanic (18 percent) and to live in the South and Midwest. In other words, McCain and his 10 Republican colleagues on the Commerce Committee want to sock Reagan-Democrats with a stiff tax bill—an extra $1,000 or so per smoking household, which is more than such families pay in income taxes.

Understand that careful analysis by Harvard's Kip Viscusi and other scholars has found that, already, "smokers save society 32 cents per pack," because they die earlier and don't incur Social Security costs. Taxes, on average, provide another 53 cents. So, someone smoking a pack a day already contributes about $310 a year to the general welfare.

The McCain bill also removes the original settlement's protections against future lawsuits, which were the reason the tobacco companies agreed to negotiate in the first place. And the bill bans animal figures in advertising (that's the dromedary in the desert as well as Joe Camel), stifles exports (cigarettes would be prohibited from duty-free airport shops, among other things), gives the Food and Drug Administration the power to ban cigarettes outright, and boosts the "look-back" penalties to $3.5 billion a year if young people don't cut down on smoking enough to satisfy the government—which, of course, they won't.

Far more likely, smoking among the young will rise, as it becomes more than ever a safe, cool way to rebel against dithering old folks. Certainly, ad bans don't deter teenagers. The last time I looked, advertis-

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ing marijuana was illegal, but pot use has been rising. In *Fear of Persuasion*, Jack Calfee of the American Enterprise Institute, perhaps the leading expert on the subject, writes that "a recent analysis of data for 22 developed nations during the years 1964-1990" found that cigarette consumption dropped more rapidly in countries that did not impose ad bans than in those that did. "A statistical analysis, taking into account standard economic variables such as price and income, revealed that ad bans were in fact weakly associated with higher not lower consumption."

If the Commerce bill seems onerous, it promises to be just the beginning. Both David Kessler, the former FDA commissioner, and C. Everett Koop, the former surgeon general, called it too weak, as did Rep. Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.) and Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.). Even Republicans were ready to toughen it.

After Goldstone's speech, Clinton repeated that his aim is to put the tobacco companies "out of the business of selling cigarettes to teenagers." McCain said, "We just want to put them out of the business of marketing to kids." The rhetoric behind the tax is to make smoking more expensive and so deter the young. But, as Goldstone points out, only 2 percent of cigarette sales are to smokers who are underage. Why penalize the other 98 percent?

There are two obvious and unspoken reasons: First, the politicians (and their plaintiff-lawyer cohorts) want the money. Second, the health police—led by the priggish Kessler and Koop and the well-financed anti-smoking groups—simply hate smokers. They want these vermin exterminated. As Koop put it, "From my point of view, anything that stops smoking is good." Clinton himself has said, "This is about changing the behavior of the United States." Or, as Jacob Sullum writes in his excellent new book, *For Your Own Good*, "The crusade for a smoke-free society . . . is aimed at the behavior of individuals, not at the behavior of corporations."

It is precisely this crusade, fueled by a political hysteria reminiscent of the tulip craze in Holland or the witch hunts in New England, that is so frightening. Senators like McCain seem to have lost their senses. Speaker Newt Gingrich says he will stay to the "left" of the administration on this issue. In the Commerce Committee, senators with strong, principled records like Spencer Abraham (R-Mich.) and Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) voted in favor of the bill.

In fact, the legislation is a pure embodiment of everything conservatives are supposed to abhor: sharply higher taxes, a massive new bureaucracy (17 new federal boards to administer the law), increased power to intrusive, do-gooder agencies like the FDA and the Department of Health and Human Services, the collection of vast sums to be spent by the federal government in unspecified ways, restrictions on commercial speech and the freedom of individuals to make their own choices, and the enshrining of the doctrine that people aren't responsible for their own actions, that they smoke because evil corporations make them do it. As Sullum writes, "According to this model, smoking is something that happens to people, not something that people do."

In fact, as a behavior, smoking is a rational choice made by people who are fully aware of the consequences, just as a motorcyclist knows he is more likely to die in an accident than the driver of a Ford Explorer. "Motorcycling," says the *Economist*, "is about 16 times more dangerous than driving a car; but a motorcyclist will tell you that the pleasure of wind in the hair and a powerful engine is worth the risk." That is a decision for the motorcyclist alone to make. And smoking, unlike driving or drinking (or doing both at the same time), is a behavior that does not hurt others—despite the fevered claims of anti-cigarette enthusiasts about secondary smoke. An article in *Investor's Business Daily* last week cited studies showing that the risks of breast cancer rise by 50 percent for women who have had an abortion, but the risks of lung cancer rise by only 19 percent for those who inhale passive smoke. A rule of thumb among epidemiologists is that any such increase of less than 100 percent is statistically insignificant.

Smokers choose what they see as pleasure—relaxation, increased concentration, solace—in exchange for the risk of dying younger than the longevity tables would normally allow. Kip Viscusi, in his book *Smoking: Making the Risky Decision*, shows that not only do smokers recognize the risks, they think their chances of dying are worse than they really are. For instance, the lifetime risk of getting lung cancer through smoking, says Viscusi, is roughly one in 10, but smokers see it as 3.7 in 10. Children, having had the anti-smoking story drummed into them from an early age, believe the risks are even higher, Viscusi found. "Most smokers (two-thirds or more) do not die of smoking-related disease," says the *Economist*. "They gamble and win."

Koop himself has said that smoking "is a voluntary act: One does not have to smoke if one does not want to." And it's true that, while the average age of people starting to smoke daily is 17.6, they don't have to keep smoking the rest of their lives. In fact, a survey by the Centers for Disease Control found that roughly the same number of Americans are former smokers as are current smokers. A questionnaire at my 25th college reunion discovered that fewer than 5

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percent of my classmates are smokers, but as students, I remember at least half were. In other words, 90 percent of the smokers quit before their mid-forties.

Still, it is fair to argue that young people are especially vulnerable to cigarettes and should be discouraged from smoking. But there are far more efficient ways to accomplish that goal than to impose hundreds of billions of dollars in taxes and other extra costs on adults who smoke legally. For example, why not give out $100 fines (like parking tickets) to children—or, better yet, their parents—if they are caught smoking or buying cigarettes? Why not suspend a teenager's driver's license for a year? These are simple steps that can be taken by state and local governments—but they deprive the federal government of all that tax money and of the chance to practice social experiments on a grand scale.

Sean Delonas

Who can possibly doubt that, if Congress and the president are successful, alcohol and fatty foods will be next? The arguments will be precisely the same—only perhaps more forceful. Roughly 25 percent more years of life before age 65 are lost each year to alcohol than to tobacco, and overeating seems to be a tougher habit to kick than smoking.

But the battle at hand is over cigarettes, and now, at last, it is a real battle. The tobacco companies made a mistake in accepting the original settlement, but they can be forgiven their desire to limit an open-ended liability. The attempt to please investors largely failed. The price of a share in Philip Morris Inc., the largest cigarette-maker, has dropped about 10 percent since then, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average has risen 15 percent.

There was much for a cartel-loving tobacco company to like in the original deal: It essentially froze market shares in place and meant that new competition wouldn't be a problem. And the increased role of the FDA could actually be helpful, seeming to award a seal of approval to a product that had become suspect. Also, the tobacco companies realized that, while they could beat individual plaintiffs fair and square in court (since juries have consistently ruled that smokers assume personal risk), they couldn't defeat states that passed laws, as Florida did in 1994, that stripped away defenses, making it inevitable that attorneys general would prevail in suits claiming Medicaid damages. These laws are truly outrageous, and in any other context conservatives would be screaming bloody murder. Typical is a bill introduced in Vermont, which states baldly: "Principles of common law and equity regarding assignment, lien, subrogation, comparative negligence, assumption of risk and other affirmative defenses normally available to a defendant are abrogated to ensure full recovery." In other words, tobacco companies are not allowed to defend themselves.

So, to save their companies, the tobacco firms felt they had to settle. But they made two horrendous blunders. First, they neglected to invite congressional representatives to the settlement negotiations—a serious affront to a bunch of proud old men. Second, at the urging of their high-priced advisers, the companies launched a big advertising campaign urging the adoption of the settlement by Congress. A neutral observer, having watched the tobacco companies dissemble and obfuscate for decades, might wonder whether such a settlement, fervently pushed by tobacco, would be in the public interest.

Hence, the McCain bill—and Goldstone's belated response. Now, what can Congress do without the companies' consent? Not very much. Politicians are left with tightened FDA regulation, marketing restrictions that fall short of violating the First Amendment (which could benefit the companies by cutting their costs and preventing competition), and, of course, higher taxes.

The tobacco industry wants Americans to think of the McCain bill as a tax bill—which is what it is. The strategy still might fail, but it is pure pleasure to see

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the cigarette-makers fighting back at last. The tobacco companies are hardly heroes, but what a great cast of villains they have arrayed against them: unscrupulous lawyers; sanctimonious health cops; vapid, whiny Democrats; and, worst of all, preening, unprincipled Republicans. Go get 'em, guys. ♦

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

By Tucker Carlson

Jeff Koltys is 13 years old and in the seventh grade at the Mary E. Volz Middle School in Runnemede, N.J., a blue-collar suburb outside Philadelphia. On a recent Wednesday morning he describes as typical, Jeff arrives at his 9:30 class, a "gifted and talented" program reserved for the school's brightest students, and sits down at a computer. He will spend the rest of the period in front of the screen, working with a desktop-publishing program to superimpose a photograph of a cigarette over a photograph of a tank. When Jeff is done with the project, which he says will likely take several class periods to complete, there will be a Winston filter tip where the tank's gun barrel once was. As Jeff explains, the image he is creating has a simple message: "Smoking kills."

Across the room, Jeff's classmates are working on similar projects. One student has used his computer to create a sinister-looking picture of Darth Vader smoking. Another has designed a grim wedding portrait of a bride and groom standing eye to eye in a graveyard, smoldering cigarettes in their teeth. Still another child is using photo-altering software to modify a Philip Morris ad; by the time she is finished, the Marlboro Man's horse will be on its back, feet in the air—dead from lethal smoke-borne carcinogens.

Jeff and his classmates work on their tobacco pictures with purpose and intensity. They have created their own anti-smoking organization—Children Opposed to Smoking Tobacco—and plan to post these images on C.O.S.T.'s Web site. When the project is completed, the students will move on to another tobacco-related effort. They may start a letter-writing campaign to state legislators in support of anti-smoking legislation. Or they may once again show up at a nearby intersection with picket signs to protest cigarette billboards. Not long ago, Jeff says, "some of us took part in a strike force," during which the children went undercover at local convenience stores and tried to convince clerks to break the law by selling them cigarettes. (Six stores are being taken to court as a result.)

There are a lot of ways kids in Jeff's class can fight Big Tobacco, but no matter what they decide to do next, their teacher, Linda Hurd, is certain to be proud of them. "My students and I have been working for two years against the tobacco companies," explains Hurd, who spends nearly all of her time in the classroom promoting anti-smoking activism. "The kids are really adamant about making a change." It's a big job. Tobacco, Hurd points out, "is intertwined throughout our whole society, the stock market, the economy." So far, her students have been willing to take on corporate nicotine peddlers in all their manifestations. The kids have investigated mutual funds to see which ones contain tobacco stocks. They've pushed local politicians to ban cigarette vending machines. At one point, students in Hurd's class sent outraged letters to a confectionary company for daring to produce candy cigarettes. "The whole project," Hurd explains, "has empowered the children," allowing them "to see through the tactics and make them become upset with the tobacco companies and take a stand." Ultimately, she says, "what we're hoping to do is to make children aware and to make children angry."

Thanks to adults like Linda Hurd, children all over America are angry about cigarette smoking, and becoming angrier. In early April, schools in all 50 states observed Kick Butts Day, an annual celebration of "tobacco control youth activism" that was started several years ago by New York City public

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advocate Mark Green. The Clinton administration has enthusiastically endorsed Kick Butts Day, and it's easy to see why. The debate over tobacco may continue in Congress for years, but with the help of enraged schoolchildren, the administration's public-relations battle has already been won. Consider some of this year's Kick Butts Day activities, detailed in press releases sent out by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, a Washington, D.C., anti-smoking group that helped organize them.

WITH THEIR HAIR-TRIGGER INSTINCT FOR MORAL OUTRAGE, CHILDREN MAKE PARTICULARLY FERVID POLITICAL RECRUITS.

In Virginia, students in suburban Falls Church held a funeral for the cartoon character Mr. Butts, who died, it was reported in the school newspaper, of "exposure to a lethal dose of truth during congressional hearings and court cases." In Cape Coral, Fla., youth activists at Gulf Middle School gave an anti-smoking presentation to local elementary-school students that included "a puppet show, a funeral, the skit Nightmare on Emphysema Street, and stand-up comedy from Mr. Black Lung." In Middletown, Ohio, officials at the local health department conducted a "tobacco ghost activity" with students at two area high schools, during which certain kids were "marked" as smokers in the morning, then marked "as ghosts as they die from the harmful effects of tobacco throughout the day." Fifth-graders in Swarthmore, Penn., put on a rally and a play to dramatize the dangers of tobacco, while their counterparts in Erie held a press conference. Students in San Bernardino, Calif., led anti-tobacco chants. Children from 87 counties in Minnesota produced anti-smoking public-service announcements. Kids in Mesa, Ariz., plastered magazine covers with stickers that warned of the tobacco advertising inside. In Georgia, middle-school students composed anti-smoking poems and short stories. Ten-year-olds in Pittsburgh wrote and directed anti-smoking videos. In Bridgeton, N.J., a group of 100 seventh-graders demanded that smoking be prohibited at bingo games in the area. A class of second-graders in Mattapan, Mass., expressed their support for a smoking ban in restaurants.

In Alabama, students at the Buhl Elementary School were so taken with the celebration that they extended it into a Kick Butts *Week*. Members of the Buhl student council roamed the halls wearing "armbands that have sobering tobacco statistics printed on them." At one event, Buhl students chanted slogans while tossing "merchandise with tobacco logos (e.g. lighters, ashtrays, T-shirts, caps, jackets, backpacks, etc.) into a huge dumpster behind the school." Later in the week, a student dressed as the Grim Reaper visited each classroom at the school to "identify potential tobacco users and make them wear a skull and crossbones." At the end of the day, students gathered for an assembly to learn about "the deadly recipe the tobacco industry concocts that kills millions of people."

With their hair-trigger instinct for moral outrage, children make particularly fervid political recruits, so it's not surprising that there was a pronounced authoritarian quality to many of the Kick Butts Day festivities. Dozens of schools conducted "undercover buying operations" at convenience stores, designed to help local law enforcement catch clerks selling cigarettes to kids. In Woodland Hills, Calif., vigilant children at the Castlemont School conducted "a hunt for smoking messages in their community." Students at Charlottesville High School in Virginia circulated a petition demanding "a stronger enforcement and disciplinary policy for teens caught smoking on school grounds." In Crookston, Minn., meanwhile, students met "their principal for dinner at a local restaurant that has banned smoking to discuss what can be done about kids who smoke on school grounds." At Valley Forge Senior High in Parma Heights, Ohio, administrators conducted "extra surveillance sweeps in school restrooms to catch student smokers." For their part, kids at Valley Forge gathered in the school cafeteria to physically assault a mannequin dressed as a cigarette.

Such an atmosphere is naturally conducive to show trials, and there were a number of them on Kick Butts Day. In Phoenix, students from Palo Verde Elementary School hauled Mr. Butts before a jury of gradeschoolers on charges of "poisoning people's lungs and causing nicotine addiction and lung cancer." In Grant Park, Ill., students at Grant Park Middle School indicted the entire tobacco industry on no fewer than seven counts, including "polluting the environment," "indecent exposure in a public restaurant," "pyromania," assault and battery, child abuse, and attempted murder.

And it wasn't just the tobacco companies who played the villain on Kick Butts Day. Individual smokers also got reeducated. Elementary-school kids in River Rouge, Mich., for instance, invited a "guest who smokes" to their class and then proceeded to

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surprise him with "anti-tobacco slogans and posters." Fifth-graders in Chelsea, Mass., fanned out on foot through their neighborhoods to "knock on the doors of friends and parents who smoke to educate them about the dangers of smoking." At Tipton Middle School in Iowa, "300 students conducted a parent survey and discovered that 50 percent of their parents smoke." Armed with the survey results, the student council promptly held "a school-wide assembly on the dangers of smoking." And just in case the kids missed the point—that many of them will soon be tobacco orphans—the school invited "doctors from Mercy Hospital Clinic and a cancer patient who had his larynx removed due to years of cigarette use."

Telling young children that their parents will soon die horrible deaths from smoking has, of course, long been a favored approach of school nurses and anti-tobacco organizations. Spread across a table in Linda Hurd's classroom at Volz Middle School is a large white banner that is covered with messages that Hurd's students have written to their relatives who smoke. The childish inscriptions are peppered with exclamation points; many of them seem both angry and desperate: "Dear Mom and Dad, Please stop smoking before you die!" "Dear Mommy, Please stop smoking. I don't want you to get cancer like Pop-Pop. I'll miss you if you do. Love, Nichole." "Dear Grandmom, I wish you could go for walks in the park with me and go to church. But you can't. You have emphysema." Hurd reads the last message out loud. "The little boy who wrote that, last month he walked in and said, 'My grandmom died on Friday,'"she explains, sounding vindicated.

It can be tough growing up as the child of a tobacco user, and the discovery of secondhand smoke has recently made it a lot tougher. Parents who smoke, it is now explained to children, are not only poisoning themselves, they are also poisoning their kids. A public-service announcement released by the California Department of Health Services makes the point explicitly. Entitled "Daddy's Girl," the radio spot opens with a daughter's voice addressing her father: "Daddy, this is your little girl. That's right, the same little girl you used to bounce on your knee while you watched football. Well, I've been meaning to ask you something all of these years: Why are you trying to kill me? That's what you're doing, you know, when you smoke those dumb cigarettes."

Heavy-handed? Maybe, but not unusual. This spring, Sue Babicz, a 31-year-old "health educator" with Blue Cross of Pennsylvania, helped organize a "peer awareness program" for 450 fourth-graders at the Wyoming Valley West School in Wilkes-Barre. At the event, an informal poll was taken to determine how many students present had parents who smoke. When more than 30 percent of the children raised their hands, the speaker decided to get tough. "He told them to go home and tell their parents not to smoke because it hurts *them*," Babicz remembers. While she approves of the message, Babicz admits that hearing an authority figure accuse their parents of child abuse can be difficult for children. "They know that their parents love them," Babicz says. On the other hand, "Why are they exposing them to smoke? It must really be a conflict. I think it's a hard thing for kids to deal with."

No doubt it is, and not simply because propaganda like this is likely to give children nightmares. When teachers criticize parents for cigarette smoking, says Kay Hymowitz, a contributing editor at the *City Journal* who is writing a book about the effect of politics on children, "what they're saying is, 'We are the more moral force in your lives, and your parents don't even know how to keep you alive.' It's very, very intrusive into the parent-child relationship." Schools are allowed to get away with this, Hymowitz points out, because somewhere along the way, "smoking has been turned from a commonsense health issue into a question of moral superiority." As a television commercial created for the state of California's anti-tobacco program puts it, smoking harms a person's lungs, "but where it hurts most is in the soul." Smoking is now considered so sinful that even dying from it doesn't erase the shame. In a 1994 paid obituary from the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, for instance, the grieving relatives of a 46-year-old man made certain to explain that he had died after "a long heroic non-smoker's battle with lung cancer."

TELLING YOUNG CHILDREN THAT THEIR PARENTS WILL SOON DIE HORRIBLE DEATHS FROM SMOKING HAS LONG BEEN A FAVORED APPROACH.

If smoking is a soul-imperiling moral flaw, then it makes sense that many of those who oppose it sound like rural preachers on the last night of revival week. Asked why smoking should be outlawed in public places, Elva Yanez, associate director of the Berkeley-based Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, responds by comparing cigarette smoking to mass murder. "I shouldn't be allowed to take a loaded gun into a restaurant and shoot it," she says heatedly. "It's the same type of issue. It's just like people aren't allowed

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to drive their cars through school playgrounds. It's that simple."

It's almost as simple for Bill Novelli, who two and a half years ago left his job at CARE to found the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. Novelli, who once ran the public-relations firm Porter Novelli, makes no apologies for using children as weapons in what he calls the Tobacco Wars. "These kids are advocates," he says, explaining why so many second-graders have become energetic lobbyists for tougher tobacco legislation. "I don't think it's a question of manipulating children or using children at all. I think it's a question of children taking their natural bent. Many of these children want to do that."

An eight-year-old's "natural bent" is political activism? Novelli sounds frustrated. Look, he says, "let's say for the sake of the conversation that we ourselves are suggesting advocacy activities for kids. I don't see that as bad. Tobacco addicts kids. Tobacco kills people. Standing up against tobacco is terribly important." Indeed, Novelli says, it may literally be the most important thing in the world. "If you want to draw a hierarchy of harms or social problems, you'd probably end up putting tobacco on top," he explains. "If you look at the thing worldwide, tobacco is like an atomic bomb on the horizon. The World Health Organization has estimated that millions and millions of people who are alive today are going to die from tobacco. It is going to be bigger than virtually anything else in terms of world crises."

FEARS ABOUT TEEN SMOKING HAVE HELPED TO SPAWN AN ENTIRE INDUSTRY OF CONSULTANTS AND FREELANCE ACTIVISTS-FOR-HIRE.

Anti-tobacco activism has obviously filled a need for Bill Novelli, as it has for others in search of more meaningful midlife careers. But it has also helped spawn an entire industry of consultants, educators, and freelance activists-for-hire. Fears about teen smoking have even created a market for Sterlen Barr, perhaps the nation's preeminent anti-tobacco rap artist. (A selection from Barr's standard work: "The tobacco industry, they're not people who care. / They get about one million teens to start smoking every year. / Only thing they care about is how to make some more cash. / Once you get addicted to the drug they all get a laugh.")

Barr, who is 30 and lives in Philadelphia, says the student audiences he speaks to up to three times a week almost always appreciate his anti-tobacco rap. "They're outraged when they hear all the information I give them because they didn't know how they were being manipulated by the tobacco industry," he says. "A lot of them think they smoke Newport, Marlboro, and Camels because they decided that. They didn't know they were being targeted. It wasn't even their choice. They're very ignorant to a lot of information they don't know." Barr himself is grateful to have found his niche in the growing anti-tobacco rap industry. Top performers, he says, "can get anywhere from $1,500 to $2,000 a day, on up" working the anti-smoking circuit. "If you get in the right situation, you can do very, very well with it." In college, Barr says he studied chemistry with plans of going to pharmacy school. Not anymore. "I've created something where I can make a lot more than a pharmacist. Isn't that awesome?"

A lot of awesome things have been happening to the tobacco-control movement lately. As one example, Linda Hurd points to the fact that both President Clinton and Vice President Gore have acknowledged the good work her students at Volz Middle School have done. "President Clinton met six of my kids at the airport last year," she says proudly. "See, he signed our banner." As she points to the presidential signature, Hurd begins to look sad. She is thinking, she says, of her own relatives who have been affected by smoking—Uncle Al, for example, a man who never smoked, and yet who died of cancer, probably because he lived with a woman who smoked. "We didn't know about secondhand smoke back then," Hurd says. Suddenly she bursts into tears. Two of her students look on uncomfortably as Hurd stifles sobs and remembers Uncle Al. "He had a 25-pound tumor," she says.

Their anti-smoking work for the day completed, Hurd's students begin to file out. The next group of children arrives, but Hurd, eager to reminisce at greater length about her family's tragic medical history, cancels the class. She spends the next 20 minutes explaining how smoking has affected her loved ones. And then the shocking news emerges: Her own son is a cigarette smoker, an "addict" who started at 13 and, despite his mother's best efforts, continues to puff two years later.

Wow, talk about irony. How'd that happen? Hurd ignores the dig, or else doesn't even notice it. Her reply comes in a bewildered monotone. It was the tobacco companies that did it, she says, and those ubiquitous cigarette ads. "He just got roped in like everyone else." ♦

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The Remarkable Rise of Democratic Russia

By Leon Aron

Few propositions about today's world can be stated with greater certainty: Never in its nearly 450 years has the modern Russian state been less imperialist, less militarized, less threatening to its neighbors and the world, and more receptive to Western ideals and practices than it is in 1998. This is obvious to anyone with even a cursory knowledge of Russian history.

This state of affairs is the result of a series of complex, often difficult choices made by the first post-Communist regime. Some of the most fateful decisions were made between 1991 and 1996, when Russia was reeling from economic depression, hyperinflation, market reforms, and postimperial trauma. Many a nation facing incomparably milder dislocations has succumbed to the temptation of nationalism as a means of securing cohesion. From Argentina to China, Malaysia, and Indonesia, countries have resorted to this palliative in recent years to dull the pain of market reforms or economic reversals.

In Russia, too, the nationalist Left, known as the "national patriots," has continually urged pugnacity in foreign policy. Since 1995, the nationalists have enjoyed a plurality in the Duma, the lower house of parliament. Indeed, early in 1996, the Duma actually voted to annul the Belavezhskie agreements of 1991, which formalized the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Such actions elicit a deafening chorus of support from the flagships of the leftist-nationalist media—*Pravda*, *Sovetskaya Rossia*, and *Zavtra*, with a combined daily press run of over half a million—and from the nearly 300 pro-Communist local newspapers.

Yet even when President Boris Yeltsin has been handed opportunities to propitiate the nationalists and reap a political windfall, he has passed them up—as he did in the case of NATO expansion. After much bluster, Yeltsin chose to sign the NATO-Russia Founding Act and to accommodate the United States and its partners, rather than reprise the Cold War even rhetorically. "More than once, the East and the West have missed opportunities to reconcile," Yeltsin said in February 1997 when the final negotiations with NATO got underway. "This chance must not be missed." Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the nationalist opposition and chairman of the Russian Communist party, meanwhile, was calling the Founding Act "unconditional surrender" and a "betrayal of Russia's interests."

This episode is emblematic of post-Communist Russia's broader strategy. Between 1992 and 1995, Moscow met all of Mikhail Gorbachev's international commitments, completing a remarkable voluntary, peaceable renunciation of the empire bequeathed to it by the Soviet Union. On September 1, 1994, when the last Russian troops left Germany, most such forces had already been removed from Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. In four years, Russia repatriated 800,000 soldiers, 400,000 civilian personnel, and 500,000 family members, and it did so despite severe shortages of housing for the soldiers and of jobs for their spouses.

In public, Moscow loudly linked its retreat from the Baltic states to the granting of full civil and political rights to the ethnic Russians living there—but all the while, it continued quietly to withdraw. In two years, the number of Russian troops in Estonia dropped from as many as 50,000 to 3,000; and with the Russian soldiers' departure from the Paldiski submarine training base in Estonia in September 1995, the Russian presence in East-Central Europe ended. Nations held captive for two and a half centuries were freed, and Russia returned to its 17th-century borders.

At the same time, a demilitarization historically unprecedented in speed and scope was underway in Russia itself. "Reduction" is a ridiculous euphemism for the systematic starvation to which Yeltsin has subjected the Soviet armed forces and military-industrial complex. In just a few years, the Russian defense sector—once the country's omnipotent overlord, master of its choicest resources, source of national pride, and livelihood of one-third of the Russian population—has been reduced to beggary.

In 1992, acting prime minister Yegor Gaidar ordered an 80 percent cut in defense procurement. Thus began the process of squeezing the military's share of Russian GDP from at least 20 percent to between 5 percent and 7 percent today. Yeltsin has promised to shrink it to 3 percent by the year 2000.

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According to Sergei Rogov, director of the USA-Canada Institute in Moscow, the armed forces' spending on organization and maintenance was at least 2.5 times lower in 1996 than in 1990; on procurement and military construction, 9 times lower; and on research and development, an astounding 10 times lower. When the government implemented an across-the-board spending "sequester" in May 1997, defense was again hit hardest. Its funding, already delayed, was slashed 20 percent.

Along the way, the Russian army's manpower shrank from around 4 million in January 1992 to 1.7 million by late 1996. In July 1997, Yeltsin signed decrees mandating a further reduction, to 1.2 million. Gen. Igor Rodionov, minister of defense at the time, referred to himself as "minister of a disintegrating army and a dying fleet." Finally, Yeltsin announced the *coup de grâce* for Russian militarism: elimination of the draft and the move to an all-volunteer force of 600,000 by the year 2000. While the transition may well take longer than three years, for a Russian leader even to talk of ending almost two centuries of conscription proves how far the country has moved from the traditional Russian (let alone Soviet) militarized state. Already Russian courts are throwing out by the dozen cases brought by the army against "deserters" who exercised their constitutional right to alternative service.

The rout of the once-invincible defense sector became evident in the year following the 1996 presidential election. Though often laid up by illness, President Yeltsin fired two defense ministers, the head of the general staff, and the commanders of the paratroop and space forces and ordered the retirement of 500 generals from the immensely bloated field-officers corps. No other Russian or Soviet leader, not even Stalin, ever attempted to remove simultaneously so many pillars of the defense establishment, for fear of destabilizing the regime (to say nothing of risking his life). Secure in the 40 million votes he had received on July 3, 1996, Yeltsin was unafraid. Dictatorships and autocracies depend on an army's good graces; democracies, even young and imperfect ones, can afford to be far less solicitous of the armed forces.

Russia's epoch-making choice to disarm is the result of democratization, not of a weak economy, as is often suggested—as if insecurity, hatred, wounded honor, messianic fervor, and a dictator's will did not regularly override economic considerations in determining the priorities of nations. The shrinking of Russia's armed forces is due to the loosening of the state's grip on the economy and to the new constraints imposed on imperialism, aggression, and brutality by public opinion, a free press, and competitive politics. The public's pressure to end the war in Chechnya is a case in point. Slow to bestow on Russia its other blessings, democracy has already made high defense expenditures and imperial adventures difficult to sustain.

Clearly, demilitarization is an expression of Russia's profound reorientation. The very criteria of national greatness have changed. Last June, in a televised address to the nation on the seventh anniversary of Russia's Declaration of State Sovereignty, Yeltsin said, "A great power is not mountains of weapons and subjects with no rights. A great power is a self-reliant and talented people with initiative. . . . In the foundation of our approach to the building of the Russian state . . . is the understanding that the country begins with each of us. And the sole measure of the greatness of our Motherland is the extent to which each citizen of Russia is free, healthy, educated, and happy." Unless this new consensus is extinguished by economic catastrophe and a return to dictatorship, Russian militarism is unlikely to revive.

It is the connection between democratization and national-security policy that makes Russia's situation so different from China's. Unlike the Russian reformers, China's leaders opted for nationalism to unite the nation during its dizzying economic transformation. As long as China remains authoritarian, its military buildup is likely to continue. And a democratic evolution will take time.

Historically, the transition from traditional to modern society, from a village economy to an urban economy, has displaced workers from the land. Everywhere, this surplus of peasantry has been attended by social convulsions, revolutions, violence, and cruelty. In Russia, the "solution" was Stalin's forced collectivization and industrialization. China, with its 800 million peasants, has yet to complete the transition. The Chinese political class, already anxious about the migration of millions of destitute peasants to the city, is justifiably afraid of instability, and its fear is the single biggest impediment to Chinese democratization—and, consequently, to demilitarization.

China is relevant to this discussion in another respect as well. Of all the morbid fantasies about a "Russian menace," the coming Sino-Russian alliance against the United States is intellectually the most embarrassing. How plausible is a lasting accord between two giant nations that vie for regional supremacy, share nearly 3,000 miles of border (much of it in dispute), and have competed for centuries for the huge, underpopulated land mass east of the Urals?

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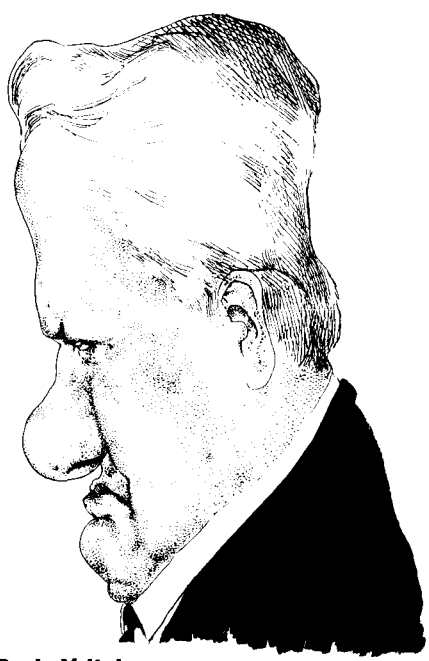
Like history's other pair of perennial combatants, Germany and France, Russia and China will come together only when both are stable and prosperous democracies—that is, not in our lifetime, and perhaps not in our children's—by which time their joining forces is unlikely to threaten the United States.

To be sure, there will be periods of Sino-Russian rapprochement. Today, Russia sells China submarines and MIGs, and Chinese migrant workers and entrepreneurs flood the Far East and Siberia, setting up Chinese-language schools for their children and opening the best restaurants in Ekaterinburg, Irkutsk, and Vladivostok. Russia will try to play the Chinese card in its dealings with Washington, just as China will try to play the Russian card—but the United States will remain far more important to both than they will be to each other. Just as certainly, rapprochement will alternate with periods of Sino-Russian tension and perhaps outright hostility.



Michael Ramirez

Boris Yeltsin

Even as it was defining its role in the post-Cold War world, Russia had to make critical choices about the former Soviet lands. Back in 1992, everyone from the nationalists on the left to the radical free marketeers on the right agreed on four points: (1) A stable and prosperous Russia was impossible without a modicum of stability in the former Soviet republics, scene of a dozen civil wars and ethnic conflicts, from Moldova to Tajikistan. (2) In the breakup of the Soviet Union, literally millions of economic, political, and human ties linking Russia and the republics had been torn, and some sort of mending—some "reintegration"—was imperative. (3) With the "new world order" buried in the hills around Sarajevo, Russia could count on no one but itself to secure peace and stability in the area. And (4) Russia's preeminence as the regional superpower was not negotiable. Beyond this core agenda, intact to this day, consensus dissolved, and two sharply divergent sets of objectives and strategies emerged.

One aimed at reviving something resembling the former USSR as quickly as possible. The cost—in treasure, world opinion, and even blood—was no object. All means were acceptable, including the stirring up of nationalist and irredentist passions among the 25 million ethnic Russians living in the region. Moscow was urged to threaten recalcitrant states with the "politicization" of their Russian communities and the redrawing of borders to reclaim areas with large Russian populations, like northern Kazakhstan and eastern Ukraine. This imperial, revanchist, and ideological agenda was advocated largely, though not exclusively, by the nationalist Left.

The second model, which might be called post-colonial, was far less ambitious. Reintegration was conceived as incremental, something that would occur naturally, through the functioning of a privatized Russian economy and a stabilized Russian democracy. Its time frame stretched over decades.

Haltingly and inconsistently, Russia opted for the latter approach. Even the April 1997 "union" with Belarus, which some American observers hastened to declare the beginning of Russia's inexorable westward march, has been quietly diluted. Within months, Russian first deputy prime minister Boris Nemtsov declared that Russia could no more unite with Belarus, a dictatorship with a Soviet-style economy, than South Korea could unite with North Korea. A week later, ostensibly in retaliation for the jailing of a Russian journalist in Belarus, Yeltsin refused permission for the Belarussian president's plane to enter Russian air space.

As for maintaining its regional dominance, however, there should be no illusions: Russia will behave much as great land powers have for millennia in asserting control over their self-declared spheres of influence. Moscow will dispense economic and military assistance to friendly regimes and withhold it from neighbors deemed insufficiently accommodating. In the case of especially recalcitrant neighbors, support for internal rebellions is always an option. Given the economic and political fragility of most of the post-Soviet states, which depend on Russian resources (especially energy) and remain susceptible to ethnic and civil strife, Moscow will sometimes be able to determine the fate of regimes.

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The case of Georgia, which initially refused to join the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States, is paradigmatic. For decades, the Muslim Abkhaz minority had harbored resentment over Georgians' political and cultural dominance. This broke into the open in August 1992, after Georgian troops entered the Abkhazian capital, Sukhumi, and opened fire on the Abkhazian parliament.

With or without Moscow's connivance, local Russian commanders provided the Abkhaz with supplies, instructors, and even occasional air support. By October 1993, the Georgian regime was in grave danger from the Abkhaz separatists and even more from the rebellion led by former president Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Georgia's first freely elected leader, deposed by Eduard Shevardnadze in a military coup. President Shevardnadze appealed to Russia for help. Only after Georgia agreed to join the CIS and granted Russia permission to retain the former Soviet military bases in the Black Sea port of Batumi and on the Turkish border did Moscow send in tanks, marines, and advisers and save Shevardnadze's life as well as his job.

In February 1994, after signing a treaty of "friendship and mutual assistance" with Yeltsin in Tbilisi, Shevardnadze said that, although many nations had offered help with "instructors and inspectors," only Russia had agreed to supply weapons to "rebuild Georgian armed forces." No one but Russia, Shevardnadze continued, "had the ability to help us in this matter." Since July 1994, a CIS-mandated peacekeeping force—consisting entirely of Russian troops—has enforced the cease-fire on the border between Abkhazia and Georgia. The force has lost 50 men to landmines and Georgian guerrillas. After the peacekeepers' mandate expired on January 31, 1997, Shevardnadze pleaded (successfully) with Moscow to renew it.

Postcolonial Russia can be expected to probe relentlessly for weakness and to exploit its neighbors' troubles in furthering its regional dominance. Nevertheless, Moscow will be constrained by a cost-benefit calculus and wary of open-ended, long-term, and expensive commitments in the former Soviet lands. Such prudential considerations were anathema both to traditional Russian messianic imperialists and to Soviet ideologues.

Most important, Russia has chosen to accept the independence and sovereignty of the former Soviet republics—which Russians designate, tellingly, as the "near abroad." This is the critical distinction between the imperial and postcolonial modes of behavior in the region, and the region's leaders understand it well. While they quickly learned to overwhelm some American columnists with complaints about Moscow's arm-twisting, they see clearly the difference between meddling and subjugation.

This explains the newly independent states' and former satellites' wholehearted support for Yeltsin in his suppression of an armed revolt by the left-nationalist supporters of the Supreme Soviet back in September-October 1993. Czech president Václav Havel called those clashes in Moscow not simply "a power struggle, but rather a fight between democracy and totalitarianism." In a joint statement, the presidents of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania called the conflict "a contest between a democratically elected president and antidemocratic power structures." Their Moldovan counterpart called the supporters of the Supreme Soviet "Communist, imperialist forces who want to turn Russia into a concentration camp." Said Shevardnadze, "In my thoughts I am on the barricades with the defenders of Russian democracy."

Hence also the sigh of relief with which the neighboring countries welcomed Yeltsin's victory over Zyuganov in the 1996 election. The warmth of the congratulations sent to the victor by the leaders of the new states far exceeded the requirements of protocol. "The future development of Ukraine depended on the results of the Russian election," declared President Leonid Kuchma. Yeltsin's victory, he continued, was "a signal that Ukraine should press ahead with economic reform."

The demilitarization of conflicts in the near abroad is a central tenet of the postcolonial creed, and for this, 1997 was by far the most productive year to date. With Yeltsin's near-miraculous resurgence after heart-bypass surgery, Moscow moved to settle all the hostilities in the region. Only in Nagorny Karabakh, over which Armenia and Azerbaijan had fought to a standstill, did Russia fail to make progress. On May 12, Russia signed an accord with Chechnya, granting it all but official recognition of independence. Within days, the leader of the self-proclaimed Transdniester Republic (a secessionist Russo-Ukrainian enclave on Moldova's border with Ukraine) signed a memorandum in the Kremlin that effectively affirmed Moldova's sovereignty over the area.

In June, the regime in Tajikistan and the Islamic opposition ended five years of bloody civil war. The same month, the Abkhaz president spent two weeks in Moscow with top-level mediators discussing an "interim protocol" for settlement of the Abkhaz-Georgian conflict; and in August, he traveled to Tbilisi for his first face-to-face meeting with Shevardnadze since the war began. On September 4, in the presence of Prime

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Minister Victor Chernomyrdin, the presidents of North Ossetia and Ingushetia (autonomous republics inside Russia) signed an agreement settling a conflict over North Ossetia's Prigorodny district, where fighting had broken out in November 1992. During the next two days in Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, Chernomyrdin held meetings with the presidents of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, who all announced they would "soon" sign border agreements with Moscow.

But by far the most impressive diplomatic coup of that busy year was the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Russia and Ukraine, which Yeltsin and Kuchma signed in Kiev on May 31. Russia is Europe's largest country, Ukraine its sixth most populous, and their peaceful relations are as essential to post-Cold War European stability as French-German rapprochement was after World War II. The two nations undertook to "respect each other's territorial integrity, confirm[ed] the inviolability of the existing borders," and pledged "mutual respect, sovereign equality, a peaceful settlement of disputes, and non-use of force or its threat."

Coming after five years of turbulent negotiations, this success was all the more stunning for the conspicuous auguries of failure. First, there was the sheer magnitude and intractability of the issues between Russia and Ukraine. One was the fate of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet, to which both countries had legitimate claims. Another was sovereignty over the beautiful and fertile Crimean peninsula, where ethnic Russians outnumbered Ukrainians by more than two to one. For almost two centuries a staple of Russian poetry, site of the most popular Russian resort, dotted with tsars' summer palaces and the dachas of Russia's best painters, musicians, and writers, the Crimea had been "given" to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic by Nikita Khrushchev in 1954, back when an independent Ukraine was inconceivable. Another highly charged issue was the status of the port and naval base of Sevastopol, a symbol of Russian military valor since the 1854-55 Crimean War against the British and French.

Then, too, there was abundant precedent for bloodshed attending postimperial divorces—the cases of England and Ireland, of India and Pakistan, of Bosnia and Serbia come to mind. In 1992, some Western experts were predicting war between Russia and Ukraine, even a nuclear exchange.

But perhaps the greatest obstacle to Russia's recognition of Ukraine as a separate nation was Ukraine's unique place in Russian history and consciousness. Kiev was the birthplace of the Russian state and the city from which Christianity spread throughout Russia. No other non-Russian part of the Soviet Union was so pivotal to Russian national identity. In no other instance were the self-imposed constraints on Russia's imperial tradition and instinct put to a more painful test than by an independent Ukraine.

In the end, Russia gave up Crimea and Sevastopol and ceded to Ukraine the entire Black Sea Fleet. Rus-

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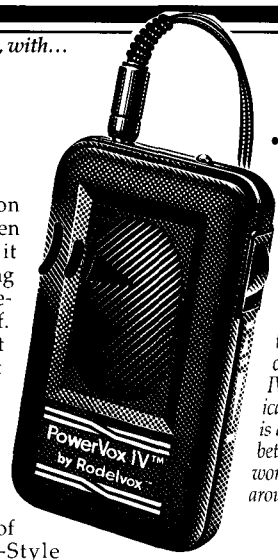

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sia would lease some of Sevastopol's naval bays and half of the fleet, with the payments subtracted from Ukraine's enormous debt to Russia for gas and oil, estimated at the time the treaty was signed at between $3 billion and $3.5 billion. This is perhaps the most generous, and least publicized, bilateral foreign-assistance program in the world today.

Russia has also shed another attribute of its imperial past: state-sponsored anti-Semitism. In the country that gave the world the "pogrom," the "pale of settlement," the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and the Doctors' Plot, there is today a flowering of Jewish cultural and religious life astounding in its richness and color. Russia is suddenly filled with brand-new Jewish schools and summer camps, newspapers and magazines, synagogues and theaters, learned and cultural societies, and Jewish-studies programs in colleges and universities.

Equally remarkable has been the massive entry of Jews into the highest echelons of government, politics, and the economy, all of which had been *judenrein* for almost half a century. Yeltsin has unabashedly promoted Jews. Thus, until the recent cabinet shakeup, his government included Boris Nemtsov, first deputy prime minister; Yakov Urinson, deputy prime minister and minister of the economy; Yevgeny Primakov, foreign minister; Alexander Lifshits, deputy chief of staff and economic adviser to the president; Mikhail Komissar, deputy chief of staff; Yevgeny Yasin, minister without portfolio for coordination and analysis of economic programs; and Emil Pain, longtime adviser to the president on interethnic and regional problems—to name just a few. In the private sector, the heads of five of the top seven "financial-industrial groups" are Jewish, among them Vladimir Gusinsky, owner of the *Most* media empire and president of the two-year-old Russian Jewish Congress. "Weimar Russia," as some called it just a few years back, did not usher in a National Socialist Russia.

For Yeltsin's opponents this is an especially galling aspect of the postimperial transition. "Why are there so many Jews in the Russian government?" Zyuganov was asked by his supporters last winter in Rostov-on-the-Don. He replied that he had already proposed to the "Jewish community" that "all nationalities must be represented in the government strictly in proportion to their share in the general population." (Less than 3 percent of the Russian population is Jewish.) Four months later, Zyuganov gave the post of economics minister in his "shadow cabinet" to the Communist governor of Krasnodar, Nikolai Kondratenko, who last month managed to refer to "kikes," "kike-Masons," "Zionists," and "cosmopolitans" some 61 times in a single speech.

In the end, the fundamental choice that Russia had to make in foreign policy was whether to accept the existing international order or seek to alter it. Russia chose to accept it. Moscow may bemoan the unfairness of the score—it does so often and loudly—but it is not trying to change the rules of the game.

Inevitably, given its history, geography, and domestic politics, Russia will find much to dislike in U.S. actions and will challenge them often—rather as France does. In poll after poll since the fall of the USSR, a majority of Russians has agreed that the United States was "using Russia's current weakness to reduce it to a second-rate power." Wherever the United States provides an opening, either by seeming not to care much about an issue or, as in Iraq, by seeming to hesitate, Russia is likely to assert its claim to be reckoned with as a major international player.

Yet this Russian assertiveness must not be mistaken—any more than French prickliness is—for anti-Americanism of the kind professed by the Soviet Union, by Iran in the 1980s, or by Iraq, Cuba, and Libya today. Russia's truculence is not informed by ideology. It is not directed to strategic objectives inimical to the vital interests of the United States, and it is not part of a relentless, "antagonistic" struggle "to the end." Rather, it is pragmatic and selective. And when America's wishes are communicated at the highest level, forcefully and unambiguously, Moscow is likely to moderate its opposition and even extend cooperation, as it did in Bosnia.

This, however, does not spell the end of our Russian problem—which may even get worse before it gets better. Russia's new foreign and security policies stem from Yeltsin's domestic revolution and personal leadership, rather than from any clever global vision. Like every great and successful modern leader with the exception of de Gaulle, Yeltsin is primarily a domestic leader. His interests, instincts, and passions—like Ronald Reagan's (and unlike Nixon's, Carter's, or Gorbachev's)—are engaged mostly and most profitably by his country's internal affairs. For that reason, Yeltsin never cared to anoint a foreign-policy alter ego, to endow a Kissinger, a Brzezinski, or a Shevardnadze with much power and independence.

He did, however, arrogate firmly to himself two key areas of international relations. One is the relationship with the United States, which Yeltsin preserved single-handed when he signed the Russia-NATO Founding

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Act—against the advice, and despite the dire warnings, of virtually the entire political class. The other is the settlement with Ukraine, to which Yeltsin, again almost alone, devoted enormous personal effort and which he advanced for five years in the face of bitter opposition. After the treaty was signed, Ukrainian officials told reporters that "only Yeltsin had the political will and strength to drop Russia's residual claims on Ukraine" and that their leadership "prayed that Mr. Yeltsin would not die before doing so."

Except in these instances, Yeltsin ranks foreign policy a distant second to his domestic agenda and uses it to accommodate the opposition rather than to expend his political capital. In the next two years, the pitfalls of this modus operandi will be increasingly obvious. Until now, Yeltsin's unique place in Russian politics, and the clout and confidence he derived from his 1996 landslide, have kept Russian foreign policy on course. The president's inevitable physical decline and his lame-duck status will change things. Like an old bulldozer—once mighty and responsive, now slow, hard to handle, its motor nearly worn out—Yeltsin is still clearing the boulders deposited by the receding Soviet glaciers, but he is clearing them now one at a time, with much screeching and creaking, and sometimes is even losing ground.

Any worsening of Yeltsin's health will increase the influence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic corps—perhaps the most recalcitrant institutional relic of the past and a class whose fall from the pinnacle of Soviet society, in both material comfort and prestige, can be likened only to that of the military. Predictably, Russian diplomats' zeal to defend the reformist regime has often been less than overwhelming.

In addition, we can expect a growing rhetorical shrillness in the next two years, as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs strives to please the contenders in the 2000 presidential election—all of whom seem far more susceptible than Yeltsin to the nationalist temptation. Russian behavior in the latest Iraq crisis, when a clearly disengaged Yeltsin mouthed a bizarre line about World War III, is a foretaste of things to come.

This must not take Americans by surprise. Seven years ago, an enormous evil empire that had poisoned everything and everyone it touched broke to pieces. Its harmful emanations, like light from a long-dead star, will continue to reach us for years to come. Russia's leaders came of age and rose under the empire. They cannot be counted on to fashion a world of which they know little. At best, in domestic politics, economics, and international relations, they will forge a hybrid. If we are lucky—as we have been with Yeltsin—the Russia they make will be more than half benign. It will be up to the next generation to turn the hybrid into something new and free of the malignant past.

U.S. policymakers must be prepared to encounter Soviet threads in the fabric of Russian behavior—such as relentless, senseless spying or sales of technology and weapons to nations hostile to the United States. Washington must counter such actions with unflinching resolve. What will never serve U.S. interests, however, is blindly to apply old stereotypes to a new reality—a reality that, in some essentials, is remarkably auspicious. ♦

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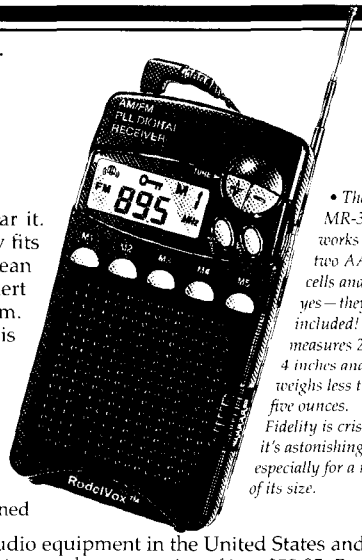

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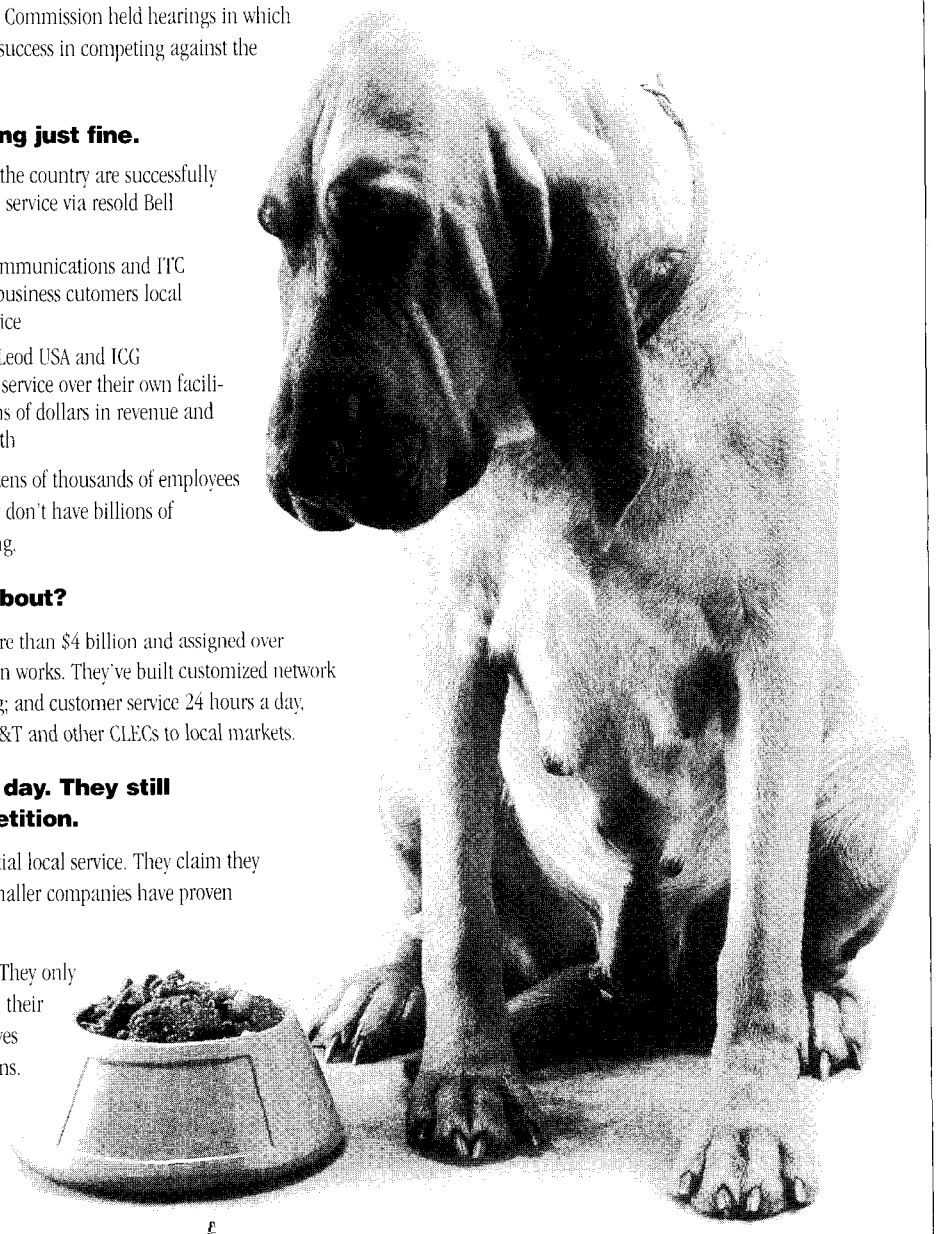

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Narnia Business

C. S. Lewis at 100

By Alan Jacobs

In Santa Barbara, California, in the English department of an evangelical Christian school called Westmont College, there stands a large piece of furniture that is, visitors are quickly informed, the *real* wardrobe—the wardrobe the Pevensie children passed through into Narnia in the first of C. S. Lewis's children's books, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*.

And in Wheaton, Illinois, on the campus of Wheaton College, another evangelical school, there is another wardrobe—another *real* wardrobe that inspired the famous beginning of the seven volumes of Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia.

These dueling wardrobes inevitably bring one thing to mind, and it is perhaps unfortunate—for an evangelical culture traditionally scornful of Roman Catholic cults of saints—that it is those Italian churches bickering for centuries over which houses the real bones of St. Luke. Among evangelicals in America, memorabilia of C. S. Lewis has begun to proliferate like relics of the early Church.

And if it's odd that America's Protestant evangelicals should start to form at least the external features of an old-fashioned Catholic sort of saint's cult, it's even odder that they would choose this Oxford don: The nonsmoking, teetotaling, low-church Americans treasuring the relics of a pipe-smoking, beer-loving, high-church Englishman.

But treasure him, they do—and not just evangelicals, but serious and religiously conservative Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and mainline Protestants of all stripes. Lewis popularized the use of "mere Christianity" (a phrase coined not by Lewis but by the seventeenth-century Puritan, Richard Baxter) to describe basic orthodoxy, the positive faith held by all traditional Christians, whatever their church or sect. And for all mere Christians, C. S. Lewis has become *the* author of the twentieth century, by a wide margin the bestselling religious writer in England and America. Thirty-five years after his death in 1963, every word he published is still in print. In anticipation of this year's centenary of his birth, dozens of studies of his work have been published and innumerable conferences and seminars have been scheduled.

UPI/Corbis-Bettmann

C.S. Lewis

Lewis himself would have been befuddled by his notoriety. In the early 1950s—after delivering the series of phenomenally successful BBC radio broadcasts later published as *Mere Christianity*, and after having his portrait on the cover of *Time* magazine—he wrote to a friend, "I am going to be (if I live long enough) one of those men who was a famous writer in his forties and dies unknown."

But since his popularity shows little sign of fading, it's worth asking how to account for his enduring fame and how good a thing that fame is. It is not enough to conclude that Lewis is deserving of admiration, as indeed he is. The Lewisians' veneration of their hero often fails to do justice either to Lewis's legacy or to the intellectual health of Christianity in the Anglo-American world.

Born in Belfast, Clive Staples Lewis—his friends and family called him "Jack"—was reared as an Ulster Protestant and came to England for the first time as a schoolboy. He hated school (like many British intellectuals, he found the public-school system barbaric) and could thrive only once his father placed him in the hands of a tutor. This memorable character, a Scots Presbyterian turned atheist, prepared Lewis well for Oxford but also confirmed the young man in his conviction that religion was something to leave behind. After serving in World War I, Lewis returned to Oxford to take first-class degrees in philosophy and English.

Starting out his career as a tutor, Lewis gradually established himself

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as a formidable scholar of medieval and renaissance literature; equally gradually, he began to lose his philosophical bearings. In his 1955 autobiography *Surprised by Joy*, he recounts with great verve and wit the collapse of his atheism and his subsequent reluctant conversion—first, in 1929, to theism and then, two years later, to full-fledged Christianity. The latter was accomplished under the gentle tutelage of two friends, Hugo Dyson and Lewis's fellow Oxford don J. R. R. Tolkien. Lewis, Dyson, and Tolkien would, some years later, become key members of an amorphous group called "the Inklings," who met regularly to drink, smoke, and celebrate poetry.

In the midst of all this, Lewis was living a very odd private life. He shared a house with a woman named Mrs. Moore (the mother of a dead friend of Lewis's), her daughter, and, eventually, Lewis's own brother Warnie, a career military officer. Ever since the Lewis cult began, there has been speculation about his relation to Mrs. Moore. In any event, Lewis's domestic responsibilities, coupled with his burdens as a popular tutor and lecturer, should have made it impossible for him to get any substantial writing done.

Thanks, however, to astonishing fluency and stubborn discipline, the works poured out: an allegorical autobiography, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1933); a profound study of medieval poetry, *The Allegory of Love* (1936); a series of science-fiction novels, beginning with *Out of the Silent Planet* in 1938; and the steady stream of Christian apologetics that would ultimately make him famous, starting with *The Problem of Pain* in 1940.

These works would also help to make him much-loathed among the English faculty at Oxford. The books were written for a general audience, and Lewis made things worse by becoming, during World War II, immensely popular with his radio addresses on the Christian faith. So too his characteristic bluffness and heartiness—charming to his friends and most of his students—were no more appealing to many of his colleagues than his Christianity. The result was that Lewis could never get elected to a professorship at Oxford, even though he was by far the most distinguished candidate. When Cambridge asked him to stand for a chair in medieval and renaissance literature, he accepted in 1955.

Courtesy of Kay Howell

The Westmont Wardrobe

Many things were changing in Lewis's life at this time. Mrs. Moore died in 1951. ("And so ends," his brother wrote in his diary, "the mysterious self-imposed slavery in which J. has lived for at least thirty years.") Lewis had stopped writing works of apologetics, for reasons still debated, but had begun a new project: the Narnia stories that would give him perhaps his greatest fame. And he had met Joy Davidson, who in 1956 became his wife.

The story of their marriage, in its external terms at least, is told in the film *Shadowlands*. (Most of the complaints about *Shadowlands* concern Anthony Hopkins's false portrayal of Lewis as a dour, buttoned-up, somber man and the film's downplaying of Lewis's Christian faith. These are valid complaints. But there is also a vocal minority of Lewisians who argue that the film's assertion of a sexual relation between Jack and Joy is unwarranted.)

The four years of marriage to Joy were the most dramatic and emotionally potent of Lewis's life, so perhaps it is not surprising that after her death in 1960 his health began to decline. He died in November 1963, but his death did not receive the attention it might have, for on that same day John F. Kennedy was shot in Dallas.

The fact that Lewis was British provides the first clue to his enduring popularity, since Britishness confers for many Americans an immediate air of culture and sophistication. And that air is increased immeasurably by Lewis's status as an Oxford and Cambridge don.

But if Americans tend to fawn over certified European cultural sophistication, they also dislike what they perceive to be pretension, and here too Lewis fits the bill. Though ideologically he differed greatly from George Orwell, he had Orwell's forcefulness of style—the same relish for slicing through obfuscation, the same let-us-clear-our-minds-of-cant bluntness. Perhaps the most famous example comes in *Mere Christianity*, when Lewis responds to the notion that Jesus was a "great moral teacher":

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> A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

This prose style grows out of a peculiarly English tradition of "plain common sense" that can be enormously appealing. And the mastery with which Orwell and Lewis employ it is almost sufficient in itself to explain the passion with which each man is admired.

But the style also helps to explain something otherwise paradoxical about Lewis's popularity. Living in an age that despises moralism, Lewis was a moralist to his bones—perhaps the greatest since Samuel Johnson. His *Screwtape Letters*—a set of counsels to an apprentice demon from his satanic master—is a masterpiece of literary moralism. But the candid humility he displayed in even his most polemical writings disarms the usual reaction against such writing. By making it clear that he stood under the same judgment, Lewis almost always managed not to appear contemptuous or superior.

He wrote clearly, confidently, and unpretentiously because he understood himself to be speaking for a tradition far greater than he. Though Lewis was by 1940 well acquainted with suffering, he began *The Problem of Pain* by disavowing any deep personal knowledge of pain and fortitude. (Even this disavowal, however, did not prevent Charles Williams from making the deadpan comment that the displeasure God displays in the Book of Job is directed less against Job than his comforters—"the sort of people who write books on the Problem of Pain.")

Those who enjoy the direct unpretentiousness of his style also tend to be pleased that Lewis was not a professional theologian. Indeed, he frequently insisted on his status as an amateur, and though he was deeply learned in the history of Christian theology, the fact that he was not by profession a theologian helped him doubly: It made his style all the more appropriate and enabled him to recognize which disputes are too recondite for readers with limited theological knowledge. Moreover, Lewis was an Anglican and therefore free to be claimed with almost equal plausibility by people of either Protestant or Catholic sensibility.

The Marion E. Wade Center

The Wheaton Wardrobe

This peculiar combination of virtues may have been what led Lewis's publisher to splash across the covers of his paperbacks: "The Most Original Christian Writer of Our Century." It is a singularly inapt phrase. In his first volume of Christian apologetics, he wrote, "I have believed myself to be re-stating ancient and orthodox doctrines. If any parts of the book are 'original,' in the sense of being novel or unorthodox, they are so against my will and as a result of my ignorance."

One truly unique thing about Lewis is the facility with which he assimilated influences—and that facility is what gave him both his successes and his failures. The first two volumes of his science-fiction trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet* and *Perelandra*, were written under the strong influence of David Lindsay's 1920 fantasy *A Voyage to Arcturus*. But the third volume, *That Hideous Strength*, is wrenchingly different in style and plot—for Lewis had fallen under the spell of Charles Williams's "spiritual thrillers" and saw no difficulty in immediately adopting Williams's peculiar idiom.

Similarly, in his polemical writings, Lewis sometimes sounds more like G. K. Chesterton than even Chesterton ever sounded. The facility in mimicry had its scholarly uses too. Having noted that we read older English authors in their own archaic English but translate their continental counterparts into modern English—a practice that makes the foreign writers sound "more like us"—Lewis proceeded, in his 1954 history of sixteenth-century literature, to translate every passage into renaissance English.

But perhaps the most notable examples of Lewis's ability to assimilate sources are found in his Chroni-

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cles of Narnia. In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, for instance, the children have come straight out of E. Nesbit's children's books, the talking animals straight out of Kenneth Grahame's, the werewolves straight out of the Gothic tradition, and even Father Christmas makes an unexplained appearance. And this is not to mention the gospel story on which the plot is built. Everything in the cupboard goes into the stew.

Lewis's literary acquisitiveness exasperated J. R. R. Tolkien, who believed that the responsibility of the fantasy writer is to build a coherent and internally consistent world. For Tolkien, Lewis's habit of assuming the voices of his favorite writers was both aesthetically and ethically dubious. Nothing infuriated him more than when Lewis used some of Tolkien's terminology—and used it, by Tolkienian standards, inaccurately. Tolkien often said that he could not have finished *The Lord of the Rings* without Lewis's support, but he could not return the admiration, and his open frustration with Lewis's fiction played a major part in the cooling of their friendship.

But the trait that Tolkien deplored is also a key to Lewis's success, for it is impossible to find someone left cold by the whole of his work: If not the space trilogy then *The Abolition of Man* is appealing; if not *Reflections on the Psalms* then *Till We Have Faces*. No one who has read much Lewis will be surprised to learn that he was a master of parody. For a writer with Lewis's evangelistic impulses, it is a wonderful skill to possess.

Though the causes of Lewis's continuing fame are fairly clear, however, its value to contemporary Christian faith is rather muddied. The work of compiling collections of "What Lewis Said" about any number of subjects is virtually complete now, and such work is surely useful, considering the range of topics on which Lewis had valuable things to say. But it is hard not to suspect that some people consult these compendia in order to avoid the labor of thinking about difficult subjects themselves. More troublesome still is the new genre devoted to "What Lewis Would Say" about problems or issues he did not encounter.

Perhaps those who expend their ingenuity imagining a Lewisian response to post-structuralism or radical feminism would serve the cause of Christianity better by formulating their own responses. To be sure, Lewisians at least show an admirable willingness to consider that someone is wiser than they, but how many mortals deserve this much reverence? There are bracelets and buttons worn by young evangelicals that read "WWJD?"—"What would Jesus do?" To that question the constant query of some Lewisians, "What would Lewis say?," draws uncomfortably close.

The respect readers feel for the man sometimes falls over into idolatry—and with idolatry comes the need to separate the orthodox from the heterodox, the sheep from the goats. More disturbing than the comic disputes over who owns the True Wardrobe are the quarrels about whether Lewis's marriage was consummated, with Lewis's literary executor Walter Hooper the most vigorous promoter of what A. N. Wilson called "The Perpetual Virginity of C. S. Lewis." And then there are the fragments of stories and poems Hooper has published since Lewis's death, fragments that other Lewisians find unworthy (sometimes on stylistic, sometimes on moral grounds).

Hooper's chief antagonist, Kathryn Lindskoog, has devoted hundreds of pages to charges that Hooper is a habitual liar and perhaps even complicit in forgery. There are legitimate questions about the way he has handled Lewis's literary estate, but Hooper has for the most part maintained a lofty silence. And this silence has maddened his critics—especially Lindskoog, who has moved from questioning Hooper's motives to questioning those of anyone who doubts her charges.

The whole spectacle is immensely unedifying and becomes more so when people start to note that Hooper is a late convert to Catholicism while Lindskoog writes for evangelical publishers. C. S. Lewis's abiding concern was to focus on the foundational beliefs that orthodox Christians have always held in common—beliefs that together constitute "mere Christianity." Lewis contends that "plain, central" Christian faith, when examined closely and historically, "turns out to be no insipid interdenominational transparency, but something positive, self-consistent, and inexhaustible."

Perhaps this delightful inexhaustibility is Lewis's most noteworthy trait. He saw himself as simply the most recent in a long series of writers who have tried over the centuries to restate the essentials of Christian faith for their time. That is why he did not think his books would be read long after his death: He expected new challenges that new generations would have to address in their own way—not by reinventing Christian doctrine, but by creatively applying that same plain, central, inexhaustible Christianity to which he devoted himself.

Many years ago V. S. Naipaul noted a peculiarity of the Indian attitude toward Gandhi: Everywhere in India Gandhi was venerated as a saint, but the social conditions against which he railed remained unchanged. It would be sad if the same fate were to befall Lewis. This is a real temptation, for to read his books is to dwell in an atmosphere of moral and spiritual health that offers dramatic relief from the confusions and frustrations of modern life. But Lewis himself always strove to encounter and interpret the world in which he lived. His admirers should remember that the achievements of the truly great are best honored not by the one who praises their works, but by the one who follows their example. ♦

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Ants and Uncles

Reading Animal Tales

By J. Bottum

There is at least one small proof that literary criticism will never be a science, and it's that there is no theory of art capable of explaining exactly why Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* is great fiction—like George Borrow's *The Bible in Spain* or Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford*, one of the small, eccentric glories of English literature.

It has something to do with the prose, of course—as demonstrated by the utter failure of attempts to Disneyfy *The Wind in the Willows* in cartoons for the video generation of children. Grahame had a diction so perfect only P. G. Wodehouse can stand with him.

But more even than any of Wodehouse's creaky melodramas, *The Wind in the Willows* ought not to work as a book. Its world is wildly inconsistent. Half the time Mr. Toad and Badger and Otter and Ratty and Mole are little animals in human clothing, and the other half, they're little humans in animal clothing. Sometimes the book is an allegory about the lost days of old, squirearchical, coach-and-inn England, and sometimes it's just a fantasy of talking beasts. There are parts of *The Wind in the Willows* that no one under thirty could possibly grasp, and other parts that no one over ten will ever grasp again. Mostly it's a tale of Eden—of a world without a Fall—and through it runs something inexplicably, impossibly, and magically *right*.

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And in the same way—or rather, in reverse—the failure of Bernard Werber's *Empire of the Ants*, a best-seller in France in 1991 and recently translated into English by Margaret Rocques, offers yet another small proof of the truth in books that readers know but that lies beyond the capacity of any theory to express.

Bernard Werber
Empire of the Ants
Bantam, 223 pp., $23.95

A tale of the meeting of talking ants and human beings, *Empire of the Ants* has every reason to work as a novel. It is carefully written in the kind of classically balanced prose the French manage so effortlessly. It is the fruit of great learning by an entomologist who has spent fifteen years studying ants. It is careful in its allegory and consistent in its fantasy. And yet, somehow, every reader who can sense that *The Wind in the Willows* is right will inevitably sense that *Empire of the Ants* is wrong.

Set during the early twenty-first century, in a Paris grown hot from global warming, Werber's story opens with a man named Jonathan Wells moving his family into the house on the rue des Sybarites that they inherited after his eccentric Uncle Edmond was stung to death by wasps.

Unfortunately, Uncle Edmond also left them in his will a single, impossibly tempting piece of advice: "Above all, never go down into the cellar." And one by one, the family succumb to the temptation and disappear down into the basement, never to return.

Meanwhile, in alternate chapters, an empire of African ant cities has established itself in the sweltering countryside outside of Paris. And in one of those cities, called Belokan, three ants have stumbled upon what looks to be a giant conspiracy to undermine the colony. There's a drone male known as number 327, a winged princess known as number 56, and a female worker known as 103,683. Amid much fascinating explanation from the author about the social organization of various insects and how ants communicate with chemical scents, 327, 56, and 103,683 undertake a dangerous mission to find the origin of the mysterious "rock-scented" ants who have infiltrated Belokan.

The human story and the ant story link up in the end, though the author seems gradually to lose interest in his humans as his ant chapters grow longer and longer. Some of Werber's descriptions are very fine, especially about ant warfare, and he is capable of genuine if slightly jarring humor—as when he describes a spider who suddenly encounters a mate on his web: "Her way of vibrating was the most erotic thing the male had ever felt. Tap tap taptaptap tap tap taptap. Ah, he could no longer resist her charms and ran to his beloved (a mere slip of a thing only four moults old, whereas he was already twelve). She was three times as big as he, but then he liked his females big."

But *Empire of the Ants* at last fails for reasons that are hard to say. It has something to do with the grossness of a few scenes—particularly the repeated descriptions of the ways that ants can kill birds and animals by entering their orifices. And it has something to do with the author's inability to decide whether he wants to teach us about ants or humans. But it has perhaps most to do with the book's failure to create a world that readers would want, through reading, to curl up in for a while.

Animal tales are hard, perhaps the hardest genre in fiction to do well. In *Watership Down*, Richard Adams managed to capture in a small way

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something of the actual feel of Homer, retold with rabbits. But he was never as successful again, and such subsequent animal tales as *The Plague Dogs* and last year's sequel, *Tales from Watership Down*, are only echoes of his first book.

The animal books that do manage the difficult feat have little in common. There's pure allegory, like the *Fables* of Aesop and of La Fontaine, or George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. There's semi-allegory, like the Brer Rabbit tales in Joel Chandler Harris's *Uncle Remus*. And there's deliberate anti-allegory, like E. B. White's *Stuart Little* and *Charlotte's Web*. There are books that want really to teach us only about animals, like Sheila Burnford's *The Incredible Journey*, and books that want really to teach us only about humans, like Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Books*. And they all seem to work.

No sure explanation can be given for exactly why Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* tops this class and Bernard Werber's *Empire of the Ants* falls out. To say that one is magic and one is not seems no help at all. But that is the truth beyond all theory that only readers know. ♦

In the Heart of Texas

Bob Wills and the Rise of Western Swing

By Brian Murray

In the late 1960s, the fiddle-playing bandleader Bob Wills became one of the first performers elected to the country music hall of fame. Ailing and near the close of his long career, Wills was by all appearances delighted to accept the honor that gave him a place beside such legendary figures as Hank Williams, Tex Ritter, and Ernest Tubb.

But in fact Wills had always been uneasy with the "country" label, and was never an active part of the Nashville scene. To be sure, over the decades, his celebrated orchestra, the Texas Playboys, had covered their share of standard country tunes, and during their 1940s heyday, the Playboys performed unforgettably at Nashville's Grand Ole Opry.

For Wills, however, "country music" connoted all the wrong things. It was too rural for his uptown ambitions, too limited for his more elaborate musical tastes. "Please," he asked *Time* magazine in 1945, "don't anybody confuse us with none of them Hillbilly outfits"—and *Time*, fumbling for a tag, dubbed him "a backwoods Guy Lombardo."

Eventually country caught up with Wills, opening itself to the influence of other popular musical styles. During the 1960s, for example, Wills worked and recorded with Merle Haggard and other rising country stars. But in the 1930s and '40s, Wills was a singular musical presence, polishing a sound that borrowed from the likes of Tommy Dorsey and Cab Calloway, Jimmie Rogers and Bessie Smith. His widely imitated formula for musical success—western swing—called for a compulsively danceable mix of blues, folk, Dixieland, and big-band jazz. Under Wills, the Texas Playboys mixed trumpets and saxophones with steel and amplified guitars and—even more radically for a country band of the time—drums.

Wills was born in east-central Texas and maintained a long association with the Lone Star state. But for years Wills based the Texas Playboys in Oklahoma. Their long-lasting radio show, originating in Tulsa, was hugely popular throughout the Southwest. Listeners elsewhere heard the band's program via recorded transcriptions sold to stations nationwide. Radio helped Wills collect the string of hits—"Faded Love," "New San Antonio Rose," and "Deep in the Heart of Texas"—that remain closely linked with his name. During the 1940s, Wills and some of his sidemen went to Hollywood, appearing in a series of low budget westerns, wearing snazzy Stetsons and crooning and yodeling in spotless saloons. These "horse operas" further boosted his

Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys

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fame, and as stars of both radio and film, the Texas Playboys filled ballrooms and dance halls from Chicago to California.

On stage, Wills was buoyant and suave, a born showman. But off the bandstand he was a binge drinker and depressive, making life tough for his musicians and his mates. Between 1920 and 1950, he was divorced four times. His fifth wife, Betty Anderson, proved unusually resilient, sticking with the cigar-chomping King of Western Swing from 1942 until his death, at seventy, in 1975.

All of this—the Texas Playboys' strange place in the history of country music, the dusty dance halls of Oklahoma, the emergence of the music recording industry thanks to radio, and the tumultuous life and times of Bob Wills—is chronicled in the new *Lone Star Swing*, a tale of a 1995 pilgrimage in search of the roots of the music by Duncan McLean, a Scottish novelist with what even he acknowledges as a somewhat absurd passion for Bob Wills's music. Of course, by the time McLean made his first trip to Texas, Wills had been dead for twenty years. But McLean wanted to encounter firsthand the remarkable culture from which the music came, and so, in a rented car, the pale Scotsman traveled "the wide, sun-struck wilds of Texas," hoping to "track down the spirit of Bob Wills."

McLean had never visited the States before; he'd only left Scotland "a handful of times," never alone, and never going very far. Born in Aberdeenshire, McLean now lives in Orkney, off the Scottish coast, where "I couldn't drive for twenty minutes in any direction without meeting the edge of the island, the sea, and having to stop." In Texas it's possible to cruise along for what seems like forever beneath the boundless clear skies. "Driving West Texas roads," McLean writes, "is a form of meditation. They're so flat and straight and wide that you don't have to concentrate to stay on them. In fact, you barely need to be conscious. You can eat, drink, read a book, write a book, all with one finger on the wheel."

Duncan McLean
Lone Star Swing
Norton, 311 pp., $14

McLean gets lost in El Paso, where every road, he decides, "ends at a Tony Llama discount boot store." But for the most part McLean avoids the big Texas cities, looking for color and inspiration in more remote and even forsaken locales. He stops in the "quiet and empty" town of Whitney, for example, the "very laid back" birthplace of Tommy Duncan, the Playboys' storied lead singer, whose distinctive voice was itself "the epitome of mellowness." Elsewhere McLean calls on veteran musicians who knew or worked with Wills and remain awed by his musical skills. Wills was, one observes, "born to be a band leader": He "made you play better than you could play."

McLean is a polished writer of fiction, the author of two novels and a book of stories, vividly entitled *Bucket of Tongues*, which won Britain's prestigious Somerset Maugham award in 1993. But in style and tone, *Lone Star Wing* closely resembles *The Lost Continent*, Bill Bryson's popular 1989 account of touring the Midwest in a borrowed Chevrolet. Like Bryson, McLean is fluid and funny, with a sharp eye for a region's curiosities and quirks. But also like Bryson, McLean can't wholly resist portraying himself as a cool dude whose progress through the provinces is too frequently hindered by difficult dealings with hopeless rubes.

Lone Star Swing, however, mostly avoids being too snide, and McLean knows how to make himself look hapless—as when he befuddles the locals with his exotic brogue. And he is genuinely, sympathetically interested in exploring a subject about which he already knows a good deal. As a critical commentary on Wills's music, *Lone Star Swing* nicely complements the last study in the field,

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Charles Townsend's exhaustive 1986 *San Antonio Rose*, a more sober and scholarly account of Wills's life and career.

Like Townsend, McLean concludes that, if Wills's music must be categorized, it's probably best called jazz. There are, he notes, the inspired improvisations and "hot solos" that mark the Playboys' best recordings of the late 1930s and early '40s, when they were "as smooth and swinging as the best of Benny Goodman and Count Basie." Wills, *Lone Star Swing* declares, "should be filed next to Cootie Williams, not Hank Williams."

But McLean also finds several intriguing musical connections that Townsend tends to underplay. McLean sees very strong links between western swing and the music called *conjunto* or *norteno*—the "accordion-led dance music of the Tex-Mex borderlands" that Wills knew well as a boy.

Wills, McLean notes, frequently lifted melodies from "the Mexican tradition," just as he lifted the "coarse swaggering tone" that marks some of his most memorable recordings, including "Spanish Fandango," "La Paloma," and "Mama Inez." Long before the Texas Playboys, the Tex-Mex dance-hall bands were adding "jazz-linked instruments to a string-based core."

McLean's best discovery comes when, finally, he finds the remaining Texas Playboys performing at a Friday night dance in an old high-school gym. These are not youthful impostors, but men who, in several cases, cut their musical teeth with Wills many years before. Now well into their sixties—and beyond—the Texas Playboys, McLean learns, still play with gusto and verve. They "were loud, they were loose, they were really swinging hard; the rhythm section pounded out the 2/4 Wills beat—lifting the dancers' feet and setting them down again—while the fiddles, sax, steel, and piano tore into wild exuberant solos left right and center. They were *getting like a coal miner*, as Tommy Duncan used to tell them to: *low down and dirty*." The Playboys keep the Stetson- and denim- and gingham-wearing crowd hopping for hours before finally wrapping it up with "a magnificent rollicking 'St. Louis Blues.'"

McLean, so far from Orkney, finds himself transported and moved by this display of western swing "in its native habitat." Suddenly too shy to speak to his musical heroes, McLean leaves the hall, "and took an hour to walk the half-mile home. I dawdled, I took detours, I danced with my shadow, and I stood motionless for minutes on end replaying that wonderful music in my head one more time before it started to fade." ♦

BIRTH OF A NATION

Cultures, Peoples, and States

By Kevin Driscoll

Dramatic as it has been, the failure of the West to find an adequate response to militant nationalism in Bosnia in the 1990s is nothing new. As Ernest Gellner reminds us in *Nationalism*, it was the Versailles peace conference in 1918 that first gave real-world sanction to theories that had been percolating in academic and literary circles for almost a century. Far more significant than the details of the peace settlement, writes Gellner, was its overall result: "The system of states set up at Versailles, in the name of the principle of self-determination, was appallingly fragile and feeble. It collapsed at the first storm." And we have been struggling to put the collapse aright ever since.

Ernest Gellner
Nationalism
NYU Press, 114 pp., $16.95

Recent decades have seen a profusion of academic studies of nationalism and its origins. Most of this work defies ready categorization, but much of it relates to the debate between the primordialists—who argue that the roots of nationalism lie in man's ancient past, if not in his genetic wiring—and the modernists or constructivists, who make some variant of the case advanced by Elie Kedourie in the first sentence of his book on the subject: "Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century."

Ernest Gellner, director of the Center for the Study of Nationalism in Prague when he died in 1995, is among the most distinguished of the modernists. Gellner is at pains, though, to differentiate himself from Kedourie (once his colleague at the London School of Economics), whose formulation he finds too simplistic. Other students of nationalism, notably Benedict Anderson and the journalist Anatol Lieven, have leveled the same charge at Gellner himself, but with little justification, judging by the present book, which gives full weight to nationalism's potent appeal: "The intensity and depth of feeling" it arouses, Gellner writes, is precisely what cries out to be explained.

Gellner himself defines nationalism as "a political principle which maintains that similarity of culture is the basic social bond." It has not arisen everywhere and in all ages; only when and where "men wanted the boundaries of social units and of

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cultures to converge." In the agrarian age, rigid social hierarchies, essentially similar from one polity to another, defined men's place in the world. While decidedly unwieldy and less than enlightened, these feudal polities had the virtue of being free of nationally or ethnically motivated conflict.

As the agrarian age gave way to scientific-industrial society, and the hierarchies that had kept ethnic passions in check eroded, the seeds of nationalism were sown. Gellner points to the Enlightenment as one of the agents preparing the way. In place of the castes that defined social existence in the agrarian age, the Enlightenment offered up the brotherhood of man, a pallid abstraction without the power to compel men's minds and organize society. By the early nineteenth century—even as statesmen were carving up the map of post-Napoleonic Europe at the Congress of Vienna, oblivious to any ethnic or nationalist considerations—the snake of nationalism was loose in the garden.

The "cold, bloodless rationalism" of the Enlightenment, Gellner writes, seemed to many nineteenth-century Europeans a repudiation of "warmth and feeling." It was perhaps inevitable, then, that an alternative would spring up, as indeed happened with the emergence of Romanticism. First advanced by literary figures who bridled at the intrusion of rationality into such intimate and subjective areas as love and beauty (Gellner cites Immanuel Kant's definition of love as "benevolence for duty's sake"), the Romantic movement quickly "extended the sphere of its influence from the personal to the political."

What has this to do with nationalism? Gellner points out that the Romantics "valued and praised feeling and specificity—above all cultural specificity." He continues, "Where reason is universal in its prescriptions, emotions are linked to specific communities, to 'cultures,' which are, precisely, associations engendered and sustained by shared sentiment, shared by members, and not shared by non-members." From there, with the aid of philosophers like Herder and later, Nietzsche, the leap to full-blown nationalism is not as far as one might think. For it is in this movement from the defense of cultural specificity to a more assertive cultural differentiation, according to Gellner, that we can see nations being created—not out of thin air, but with enough deliberateness to cast doubt on the primordialist position.

Despite the rapid rise of nationalist thought in the nineteenth century, nationalism hardly altered the European map drawn at Vienna. "On the whole," Gellner writes, "the handiwork of the peacemakers at Vienna had worn well." Even so, nationalism's dominance in ideology and in literature would more than compensate for its relative ineffectiveness on the ground. "Come 1918," writes Gellner, "the crucial standing of nationalism as a principle of political legitimacy is as self-evident as it had been irrelevant in 1815." So it was that the snake in the garden at Vienna became Versailles's eight-hundred-pound gorilla—the vaunted principle of self-determination, which the conferees would honor to such drastic effect.

These ideas did not wash over Europe in a single, even wave of nationalist sentiment. Gellner identifies four contiguous zones in which historical, cultural, and organizational factors combined to produce distinctive marriages between state and culture.

In the first zone, comprising Europe's Atlantic coast, state and culture developed in tandem and were both well established in nation states like England, France, Portugal, and Spain before nationalism came along. Thus, nationalism's effects in this zone were relatively mild. In the second zone, roughly the area of the old Holy Roman Empire, there were two cultures, the German and the Italian, but no states with which to pair them. Nationalism's challenge here, according to Gellner, was to forge states to house the cultures—a task of political unification that, thanks to the absence of large ethnic minorities and the relative compactness of the territories, was accomplished fairly easily.

It is in the third and fourth zones that matters become genuinely complicated. In the third, Eastern Europe excluding the former Soviet Union, there is a multiplicity of cultures and of states, few of which coincide. When you add myriad linguistic differences to the mix, according to Gellner, this region seems predestined for disaster under the impact of nationalism. The fourth zone, the former Soviet Union, is a work in progress. The imposition of the Soviet empire after the dissolution of its Tsarist predecessor delayed the arrival of nationalism. It remains to be seen what shape nationalism will take in this part of Europe.

Gellner's study of nationalism, far broader and more nuanced than a brief review can convey, is an impressive accomplishment, drawing on philosophy, political science, history, theology, and literature. Indeed, the book's brevity belies its intellectual heft. Perhaps the most valuable lines come in the concluding chapter, entitled "Practical Implications." "Political stability is in itself a good," Gellner writes. "The idea that any ongoing, established political order deserves to be corrected, or even abolished, because it fails to satisfy an abstract principle (such as the 'self-determination of nations') is indeed absurd." Gellner reveals here his acute awareness that, at bottom, the attempt to come to terms with nationalism—whether it be part of man's primordial past, or the relatively recent creation of ideologues—is a struggle to master what Isaiah Berlin (citing Kant) called "the crooked timber of humanity," from which, Kant reminds us, "no straight thing was ever made." ♦

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The Dow Jones Industrial Average Breaks 9000
—*News item*

Parody

The First Totally Honest Stock Market Story

FRIDAY'S MARKETS

By VINNIE FOSTER WYNANS III
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

The market rallied early this morning for reasons nobody understands and nobody predicted. CNBC analysts confidently asserted it had something to do with the Senegalese money supply, but others pointed to revised monthly figures showing a poor tuna haul off the Peruvian coast.

The Dow turned down in late morning due to profit-taking—which is a meaningless phrase we financial journalists use when we don't know what we are talking about.

Around noontime, the tech stocks rallied (perhaps a result of profit-giving?) before a late wave of selling sent stocks lower. (This wave of selling was miraculously met by a wave of buying since in each transaction there is one buyer and one seller.)

All in all, it was a normal day on Wall Street. Advances led declines by 4 to 1, the bond market was incomprehensibly boring, the Mets beat the Phillies 6 to 2, and Kate Winslet's measurements remained 35-29-38.

For the bulk of this story, as in most financial services stories, I will quote from a series of famous blowhards, all of whom predicted that this bull market would top out at 7500.

"Some of the young bucks think that markets only go up, and not down," opines Seymour Kaufman of Dean-Witter-Marcus-Garvey. "They've been misled by the experience of the past 17 years."

"Sure I've missed the last 6,000 points of the rally," says Sherman McCoy of First Swiss-Credit Boston, who shifted his assets into gold last spring, "but when the correction comes, my position is going to be looking pretty good."

"I thought the market was overvalued at 8000," says Chris Clough of Travelers-Citicorp-Disney-American-Express-Baskin-Robbins-Lynch & Jenrette. "Now that PE ratios are 67 times higher, my argument is more intellectually coherent than ever."

We journalists put these quotations into our stories to prove we are savvy old heads (even if we are 25-year-olds fresh from a wire service), but if you listen to any of the advice from these old goats you are crazy. In fact if you have read this far into the story, you are nuts too.

Professional traders will know all about yesterday's markets from their computer terminals, and they shouldn't need a $37,000 a year journalist to spin it out for them. Normal investors shouldn't read day-to-day market reports because it will only cause them to churn their accounts.

Elaine Garzarelli has to be mentioned in every market story so this is the paragraph in which I am doing that. "Past performance is no guarantee of future results," said Ms. Garzarelli sagely.

To fill out the rest of my space so I can go home I will now throw in a few company results, which you could read on the most active table if you were really interested. **Microsoft** was up 1/4. **Dell** was down 1/8. **Motorola** was down 2. Hi Mom. **Exxon** was up 3 1/8. If anybody would like a slightly used Exercycle, please call (212) 555-2000. **Ford** was up 1/2. Germany is invading Belgium. I see England, I see France, I see someone's underpants. Bloomberg was off by 2 1/2.

Late news flash: the Clinton administration has signed a new incentives package with the American people that allows the president to sexually assault a stewardess every time the Dow crosses another 1000 barrier.

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We Agreed To Change The Way We Do Business... Not To Go Out Of Business.

Last June, our industry agreed to historic concessions that would change forever the way tobacco products are made, marketed and sold in this country.

While we are still committed to change, regrettably we believe the political process has ended any prospect for achieving a rational, comprehensive tobacco solution. Instead of mounting the kind of massive and sustained assault on underage tobacco use that the politicians all say they favor, Congress is now considering legislation that is not only unconstitutional, but also would:

- Impose half a *trillion* dollars in new taxes on the American people.
- Allow an unelected federal agency to make it illegal for adults to buy tobacco products.
- Create a black market in tobacco products.
- Establish 17 new federal bureaucracies.
- Devastate the tobacco industry and cost thousands of jobs among retailers, wholesalers, distributors, growers and others.

For our employees and the millions of Americans who use our products and work with the industry, we must oppose this effort. We agreed to fundamental change in the way we do business, but we cannot agree to changes that would put us out of business.

Philip Morris Incorporated • R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company
Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corporation
Lorillard Tobacco Company • United States Tobacco Company

www.tobaccoresolution.com

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